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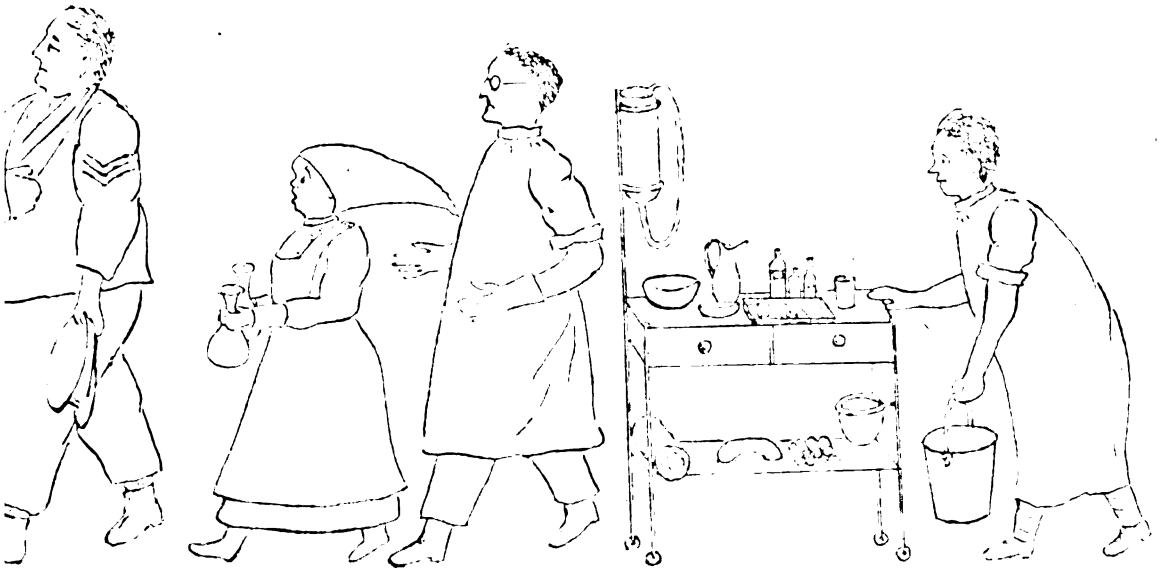

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Humour in Tragedy

Hospital Life behind 3 Fronts by a Canadian Nursing Sister

With an Introduction by
The Rt. Hon. The
Lord Beaverbrook

Illustrated with 64 Very Original Pen & Ink Sketches by the Author

Constance Bruce

London: SKEFFINGTON & SON, Ltd.
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THE FOREWORD

BY THE RT. HON. THE LORD BEAVERBROOK

As Canadian "Eye Witness" and the author of "Canada in Khaki," I have frequently regretted the lack of opportunity to tell all the wonderful story which should be told of the work of the C.A.M.C., especially in relation to the heroism and devotion of the Canadian women who are attached to it.

The official record of this branch of the Canadian service is in able hands, but this book of Miss Constance Bruce serves to provide a peep behind the scenes of the Canadian Army Hospital in action.

It is a very unofficial and delightful tale of the adventures of No. 1 Canadian Stationary Hospital in France, at Lemnos, at Cairo and at Salonica.

Miss Bruce writes with much charm and humour and sometimes with true and touching pathos. I am certain the book will commend itself not only to all Canadians, but the wider public of the British Empire, which is only realising slowly the steadfastness of our women in their adventures in the greatest adventure in the world.

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TO WINIFRED

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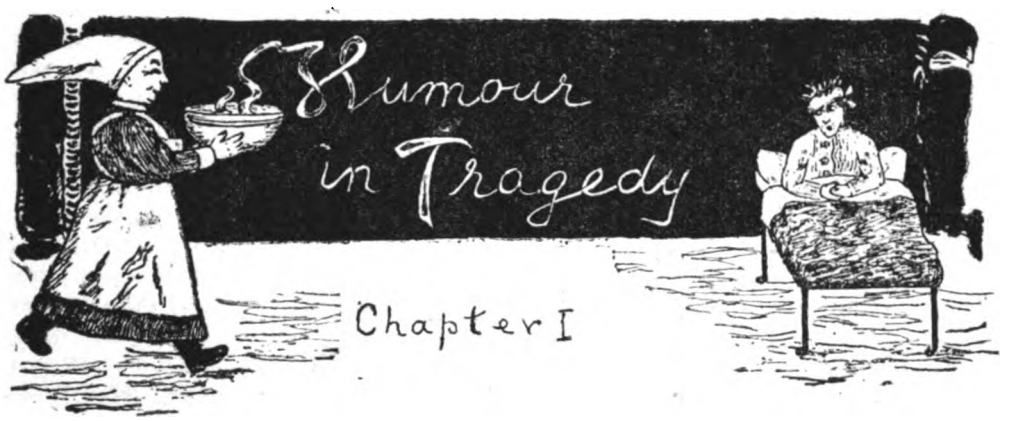

It was a glorious night in September, 1914, when the late troopship *Franconia*, with her lights blanketed, and most of her passengers asleep, loosed her moorings, and glided slowly into midstream on the St. Lawrence River. Silently she cut her way through the waters, like a phantom, frightened of the night, and of the mystery around her. Here and there, framed by the port-holes, eager faces looked out, faces of men who understood the significance of the widening stretch of water, both to the keepers of the firesides and to themselves. Above, the decks were deserted, except for a little group of Nursing Sisters, who had remained up to see the last of their country, and a few lonely-looking figures, silhouetted against the rising moon.

For some weeks past the cry of war had startled the civilized world, and when the Land of the Maple heard it, her children answered gladly. Those who came forward had not stopped to count the cost, for the excitement was thrilling, the lottery alluring, and the cause glorious; but now that the confusion was passed, and the fulfilment of vows alone remained to be faced, things took on a more sombre aspect, and as the familiar outline of the city faded, and only a line of lights remained, there were few who did not view it through a mist of tears.

Slowly the moon rose until the ship seemed to be retreating down a road of sparkling silver, reaching to the horizon, as it were a path of glory in the wake of the brave.

Morning broke cold and clear on Gaspé Bay, where the vessels assembled for their memorable voyage across the Atlantic Ocean. Troopships scattered in every direction, bearing their offerings for the insatiable altar of war. Khaki-clad figures massed at every vantage point, even the most distant boats showing their human freight, blurred into indistinguishable lines of brown, against the familiar grey. Small craft dodged in and out, and, occasionally, one caught glimpses of glum-looking cruisers, which lay about in an ominous way.

On the 3rd of October an order was given for the vessels to move into position.

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The *Franconia* was placed midway and, from her decks at sunset, the long chain seemed to stretch from infinity into infinity. Leaving the sheltering arms of the St. Lawrence, the troopships were formed into three lines, punctuated by the escorting cruisers.

Dusk deepened into darkness, enveloping and obliterating all things as it crept westward, until at last nothing was visible, except an occasional searchlight, signalling back its " dot-dash, dash-dot " messages to its shrouded companions.

Sailor with neat and warlike appearance.

Sensations of absolute security and imminent danger mingled strangely. " Sleep, sleep," whispered the downy pillows. " We have been here many times before, and nothing has ever happened to us. We live on the ocean and are always safe. Sleep, sleep." But the rushing waves sang monotonously " Sleep, but we are deep. We do not pledge ourselves. Sleep, sleep "; and the faint " All's well," of the Night Watch, woke the echo " as yet " in one's heart.

Far out over the sea the ships ploughed through the night, children of one family, bound for one port, and moving as though held in place by a gigantic submarine device. One knew that somewhere in those dark waters lurked hostile messengers of death; but the cry of the Watch was insistent, and forced confidence into the faintest heart— " All's well."

One by one the stars faded, a streak of ivory glimmered on the horizon, and at last the sky reddened for the sunrise. There were no bells calling from cathedral towers, no chanting choirs, no deep-toned organs; but it was Sunday, and the fresh wind and fringed waves called to worship on the world of waters.

The men were lined up for service on the aft-deck, and, as one looked upon their faces, there came an indescribable feeling of sadness and foreboding. What scenes there would have been had the shadowy hand of Fate become visible, as it moved along the lines! After the service, strong voices rose above the music of the band, like a mighty prayer :—

" O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Be thou our guide while troubles last,
And our eternal home."

and the prayer was heard, but some of the bravest and best were needed for its great fulfilment.

Day by day the sun rose on the little fleet, sailing steadily eastward, until it drew into Plymouth Harbour. The excitement on land, caused by its arrival, was apparent from the decks. People flocked

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everywhere, cheering and shouting as the procession sailed by, truly a hearty and touching welcome to those who had come to attest their vows of devotion to the Motherland across the sea.

That evening, from the sun-deck, the scene was stirring. Columns of smoke rose black against a dull red sky, vessels were unloading their cargoes, and cases of ammunition were piled on the docks, all crying, as with one voice, "War," and, outlined against it all were the colossal shadows of troopships being towed into a long double line, to the accompaniment of martial airs, which clashed from the various bands.

It was thrilling to think of the reason of it all, and of the bond which drew her distant colonies back to the pulsating heart of Britain, in her hour of need, ready to die, that she might rise more glorious still, to flash her undimmed light of freedom over the oceans of the world.

Two days later the Nursing Sisters disembarked and entrained for London.

To one accustomed to the New World, a strange impression of completeness is experienced while travelling in the Old. The energetic noise and bustle of construction have given place to a finished and time-regulated force, as of well-oiled machinery. No wooden "snake-fences" are visible, but, in their stead, are soft hedges. No new villages are seen with flaming signboards, forcing their arguments on the unoffending public; but everywhere little groups of houses, often surmounted by a church spire, nestle among the green hills, as though they had grown to be part of them.

It was nearing midnight when the train pulled into Waterloo. Buses were drawn up, into which the new arrivals clambered, accompanied by their "light luggage," and soon they arrived at St. Thomas's Hospital, where they were to be domiciled during their stay in London.

With eager enthusiasm many set out next morning to see Westminster Abbey. Is there anywhere such a monument as this of Britain to her honoured dead? Here, in the dust of centuries, they lie, sublime. As one enters, a sense of awe is felt, as though the atmosphere were charged, and one had touched the circuit which joined together the souls of ages. They honour Westminster who are buried within its dim recesses, for their spirits look back upon a limited and stilted world, where some adoring souls have passed the verdict "Great."

Any attempt to do justice to the former uniforms, worn by the Sisters, would be futile. The surprised citizens usually mistook them for women police, suffragettes or members of an orphan asylum.

The first service in London was attended at St. Paul's Cathedral, and two Sisters, who were very tired, disgraced their friends by falling asleep.

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CHAPTER II.

FRANCE

WHEN the three weeks in London were over, the Sisters left for France, where, upon arrival at Boulogne, some were ordered to Wimereux, a pretty suburb of this city, though, due to the frailty of the conveyance, they expected to finish their journey on foot, surrounded by the remaining portion of the carriage floor.

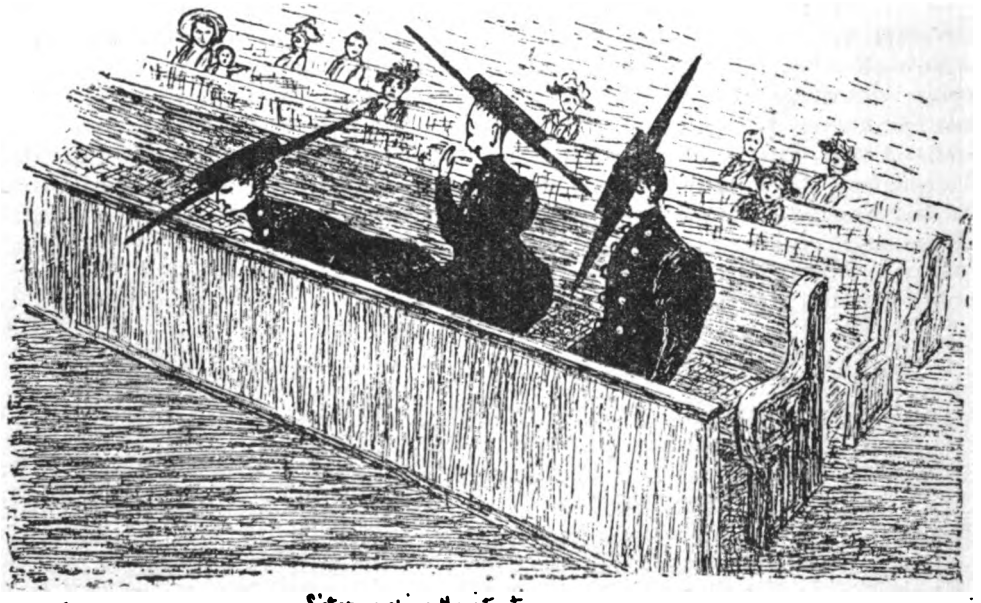
Late in the afternoon they drew up at the entrance to the Grand Hotel, or, as it was then called, No. 14 Stationary Hospital.

It was pleasing to see how friendly the French and English had become, though knowing practically nothing of each other's language. In fact, there seemed to be such an understanding between the British Tommies and the youth of France that a soldier was scarcely seated on the beach before he was literally covered with children.

There was one outstanding exception, however, where the French were not understood, to wit, in the case of Madeleine, Thérèse, and Josephine, who came daily to the hospital, along with many others of the scrubbing brigade. Madeleine was short and fat, Thérèse tall and thin, but Josephine was neither short nor fat, nor tall nor thin. She had frumpy hair, squinty eyes, and a genuine love for all mankind.

Now, Josephine's face being peculiarly free from charm, she was deemed suitable to work with the Laboratory Orderly, so she was warned and her task assigned. Several times the Sister strolled in casually to see that the work was progressing, but, after a time, there was a cessation of operations, and giggles, unmistakably French, were heard. Josephine was discovered later, locked in a fond embrace behind the door. Truly love is a language of the eyes.

Now that the ice was broken, it was thought advisable to move the flirtatious one to a ward where she could be watched; but her devotion to the Allies reached its



Sister grasping the situation

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climax when, on Christmas morning, she was discovered holding a spray of mistletoe over her head with one hand, while she scrubbed the floor vigorously with the other.

After this Josephine bore a decided grudge against all Sisters, and the opportunity for a counter-attack soon presented itself

"Sister, will you please come and find out what these bally French girls want?" entreats an Orderly; so the Sister comes, knowing little of French girls, and less of their language. "What is the trouble?" she asks, with an elaborate French accent.

"*Je ne comprends pas*," explains Josephine. "No speak *Anglais*," so the Sister tries again, and gathers from the reply that the amount of linen is too much for them to carry to the laundry

"But where is the horse?" she inquires. All speak at once, and she learns that it is, at the moment, ascending the three flights of stairs. "*Le cheval*," she persists, "*où est-il?*" Josephine points to the ceiling perplexedly, and the others laugh.

The Sister grows nervous as an interested crowd collects. "*Allez-vous-en*," she urges, and, as they stroll away, she commands them to find some one who speaks French, or remain downstairs. Evidently the tone, if nothing else, has made the situation quite clear to them, for they are soon safely out of sight—not out of hearing, though, for, just as an envious Sister expresses her admiration for linguists, a shrill voice comes from the floor below, "Sister no *parler français, na-poo*, no goot."

The hospital wards, at this time, had an incongruous appearance, especially those of the ground floor, where the rapid and necessarily incomplete change had left the words *Table d'Hôte*, and similar signs, on the doors, while patients with shocking wounds were packed around the walls. Upstairs, the cases were of a minor nature, but greater in number, and, after a convoy, it was pitiable to see the rooms and passages literally strewn with wounded, until one had to step over them in passing, their bandages and cloths stiff with blood and caked with mud.

Downstairs, the more serious cases were bathed and put to bed. Some slept with their heads covered, as they had done, for safety, in the trenches, and, occasionally, white faces darted out to challenge an imaginary enemy, the fear in their eyes at such a time giving one some idea of the horrors undergone by sentries in the firing-line. Delirious "head-cases," swathed in bandages, rose stealthily in the dimly-lit ward. Many moaned as they turned in their sleep, and old soldiers, who would rather die than show signs of weakness, breathed hard in agony. Usually, behind screens were those who waited for death to end their misery. "Listen! oh, listen to that lovely music!" they would often say, or "See that picture on the wall? Isn't it beautiful?" It seemed as though, when a certain stage of unconsciousness was reached, support to a limb, or a hot compress to a wound, imparted to the brain a sensation of an enchanting sight or sound. There they were, Briton and German side by side, enduring and fighting, but both against a common enemy this time.

In one corner was a fair-haired boy, badly wounded in the spine, who called continually for his mother. As the Night Sister went off duty one morning, he told her that it was his birthday, and that he was seventeen years old. "I didn't think last year that I should be here," he said, with a ghost of a smile on his sweet face.

"Don't worry, matey," consoled a friend. "The war will soon be over, and you'll be home for the next." But as the Sister came on duty that evening she met the Stretcher-bearers, carrying away the still form of a boy, on his seventeenth birthday. What different scenes the walls had witnessed, only a few short weeks before, when gay tourists thronged the hotel, and bands played through the summer evenings!

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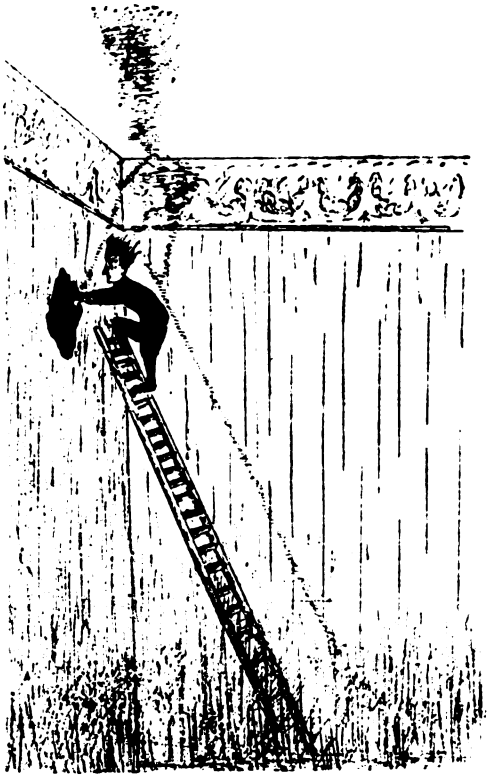
Night duty was very gruesome, at this time, for the searchlights, sweeping sea and sky, flashed regularly through the windows, lighting up the wards, and showing rows of ghastly faces, more like those of spirits than of men. But there were always glorious mornings, when the waves seemed to laugh along the shore, making one feel that, after all, there was some happiness left in the world.

In a bed beside a window was a boy, riddled with bullet wounds, who always asked for a description of the sunrise, that he might picture to himself what he would never again enjoy. "Is there lots of pink in it this morning?" he would ask, with a yearning expression in his sunken eyes. One night, when a storm was raging, and the wind was howling around, it seemed that his spirit grew weary of this world, for it drifted out with the tide; and, in the morning, as the Sister stood beside his empty bed, looking out on a glassy sea, she wondered how it seemed to him, now that the storm of his life was over.



Well-meaning but rash Orderly.

Though the nights were essentially pathetic, they were not without a humorous side when, for instance, the chandelier escaped from its moorings.

A faint odour of gas is detected in the ward, and the Sister decides to report same to the Night Wardmaster. Softly she creeps to his side, and finds him—it cannot be asleep on duty, but holding a telepathic communication with Morpheus. "Sergeant," she breathes, but he does not move, so she nudges him gently.

"Oh, good evening!" he exclaims, blinking his eyes. The Sister tells him of the gas, and he is very sympathetic until she suggests his co-operation, when he proposes "marking time" on it until the morning. Knowing something of Night Wardmasters, however, she stands unmoved, so the Sergeant rouses himself reluctantly, and summons a few of the unfortunates "on call." Together they file into the ward with a long step-ladder, which they place in position, while one ascends. There is a hole near the ceiling, through which he thrusts his head. "It's between the walls," he cries, with an air of keen discernment. "Shall I strike a match, to see just what is wrong?" Being anxious to save a few fragments of the building, the Sister protests, so he meekly descends, and they all stand and look at each other.

"Suppose," proposes the Sergeant, "we try the chandelier," at which suggestion they hold the ladder in the middle of the room while another climbs upwards. Sud-

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denly something gives way, the man grabs wildly at anything within reach, and the second "on call" comes down, leaving the chandelier suspended by a couple of wires.

"I think they will hold," he remarks dubiously, but the next opinion comes from a patient with a broken leg, directly beneath. It is short, but decidedly to the point, and the scandalized Sergeant thinks it wise to follow his advice. At last the opening is sealed, by the aid of a cake of soap, and the wires are cut with such care that, except for two men by a window, three in the corner, and little groups about the room, not a creature is disturbed, and the rescuing party wriggles on tip-toe through the door. The Night Sisters were quartered in a house situated on the shore, and thus exposed to the wind. They froze through the day, as they lay on canvas beds, and when they tumbled out to light their one candle, their teeth chattered, and their hands were so benumbed that they could scarcely dress. They shivered downstairs, and through the hall out into the narrow Rue des Anglais.

Mme in abstracted mood.

Everything was strange in this new world of war. The roads were darkened, and the faint glow from the shop-windows showed the village streets to be packed with soldiers, crowding into the little *magasins* to buy souvenirs of their new home, or wandering about aimlessly.

The restaurant was usually filled with French and Belgian officers. Dinner consisted of three small courses of meat alone, considerable time elapsing between each, in which interval one was supposed to eat abundantly of the bread, generously provided at each table. Here one beheld Louise, a would-be belle, with hair curled until she resembled an animated feather-duster. She spent most of her time in the corners of the room, rolling vigilant eyes towards *Les beaux officiers*, but deaf to every feminine entreaty. In fact, so partial was she that, when the arrival of the Rawal Pindi Hospital brought the Indian officers under her direct patronage, it was a miracle that all mere women were not starved to death.

The Compound, where contagious diseases were treated, comprised the former bathing-houses of the hotel, and many others built for the purpose, one hundred and fifty in all. A pretty village it made, with tiny, white bordered streets, up which the waves came splashing at high-tide. Meningitis, scarlet fever, diphtheria, measles, etc., were nursed here, with a minimum risk of cross-infection. Even while taking their exercises on the beach, each colony wore its coloured rosette, and if, at any time, a blue and green were seen within five yards of each other, woe befell them! Yellows

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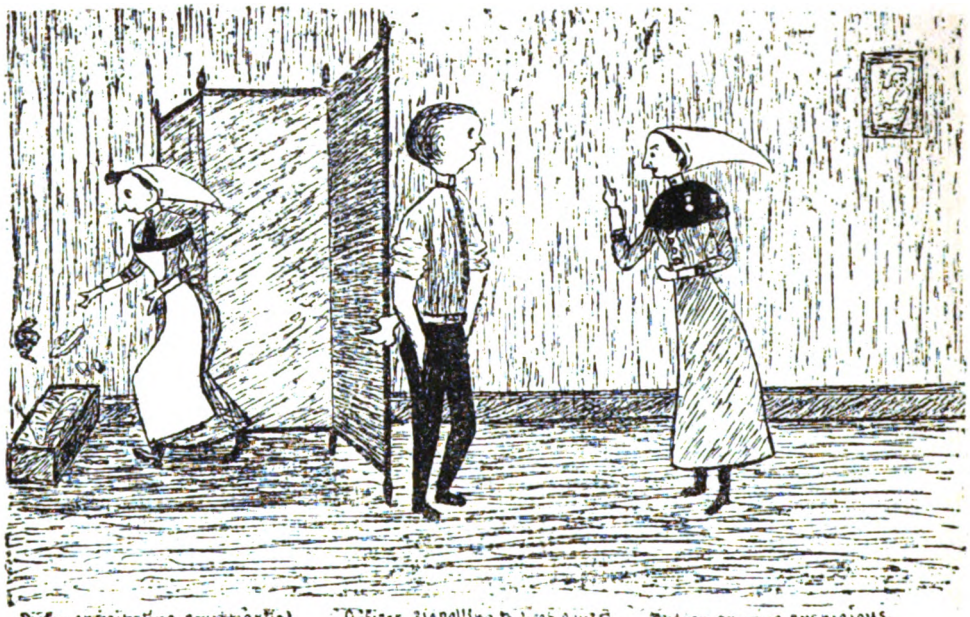

and reds passed in haughty disdain, nor cast as much as a glance in each other's direction.

In the laboratory wing of the hospital there was a number of officers, and the Sister-in-Charge, having seen fifteen years' service, was in a position to give advice regarding such. The Sisters were rounded up regularly, and ushered into her " bunk," where she solemnly warned them that army men had frequently been known to flirt, sometimes, in fact, even to turn and laugh at their innocent victims. The Sisters were horrified at the thought, but she assured them that it was so.

On a certain occasion, when a Sister was sent to stir some pudding over the stove in the hall, she came in unexpectedly, to find the respected old Charge Sister sipping tea behind a screen with one of the same deadly men against whom they had so frequently been warned! There was a box in one corner of the room, into which she was wont to throw cups, saucers, cakes, teapot and table cloth, with the most amazing dexterity, as it were in the twinkling of an eye, at the sound of approaching footsteps; but she was not on guard on this particular afternoon, so the secret became known.

After this, others were allowed to mingle with these dangerous beings, but she always warned the newcomers, with her face screwed up on one side, and her finger close against her cheek, " Not a word to the wife."

There was one person, however, who always got the better of her, a little Orderly who stood four feet eight, wore a simple smile on principle, and went by the name of " Tich."

" Hurry now, fly for your life," the Charge Sister would order, stamping her feet. Whether it was the stamping, or the accompanying ocular gleam, it would be difficult to say, but in time the Orderlies were literally running, up the corridor, down the corridor, rushing like mad things downstairs, and dashing unexpectedly around

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corners, until one's life was scarcely safe in the place. Tich, however, refused to "fly for his life." If he were in danger of being caught in a prohibited precinct, such as the cupboard where chocolate was kept, he would spring from balcony to balcony, along the outside of the building at a dizzy height, and appear bustling down the corridor, seemingly up to his eyes in work.

One morning the Charge Sister confided to her staff that she had found a place of safety for the pudding, which had a way of melting before the presence of Tich, as snow before the sun. The chosen spot was the large linen-box, to which Tich seldom went, for a clean gown held little fascination for him, regardless of the Sister's encouraging and frequent suggestion that as he was such a smart young man, she supposed he would like a fresh apron. All necessary precautions were taken on this particular day; the Orderlies were kept busy at dish-washing, two Sisters were put on outpost duty, and she of the fifteen years' experience seized the pan, and, running to the linen-box, deposited it safely within. An hour later, Tich emerged, robed in spotless white, and, when they ran in an excited group to the linen-box, they found that half the pudding had disappeared, a small portion being discovered later on the bosom of Tich's clean gown.

Tich getting a clean gown.

As the weather became intensely cold, two Sisters, after much speculating, moved into a *pension* where they were able to secure an open fire. Eagerly they fitted up the little room, and boasted of their good fortune to their companions, for their friends had enjoyed a much more elaborate room heretofore. They invited a few Sisters to their house-warming and, when the hour arrived, stood with pieces of wax-candle in hand, ready to throw them to the flames that they might burst forth radiantly, and the impression on entering be one of affluence. When the fire had been lit for a short time, little streams of smoke began to find their way to the delicate ornaments on the mantle, which had been put out for the occasion. It was a bit disconcerting, but they exhorted each other with kindly words, knowing that newly-kindled fires frequently show eccentricities, and told themselves that it would soon be in splendid form. This seemed doubtful, for the atmosphere was taking on a sooty haze, and every surface in the room was covered with a layer of black powder. Soon the smoke was ascending in volumes from the fireplace, so that they could scarcely breathe. It was very cold, for the fire had not had time to have

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any effect, as far as warmth was concerned, but they were forced to open first one window and then another, until the place was more like an ice-house than a cosy boudoir. Just then the bell rang, and they hurriedly opened the door to get a draught of air through the room, that at least they might be seen on entering. In desperation they threw the bits of candle on the fire, but, instead of bright flames, a most appalling odour of grease came forth. The friends were heard to give vent to exclamations of a rather uncharitable nature, when they were met half way up the stairs by thick smoke and an obnoxious smell; but they came on bravely and, when they reached the room, saw the Sisters, dimly outlined gasping for breath. No words can describe the chagrin. They had flaunted the merits of their apartment before their friends, taking a cruel delight in seeing their eyes almost fill with envious tears, and, now that the hour of triumph had arrived, it was hard indeed to be so humiliated; but the guests were kind, and even helped to put out the fire before returning home. Thus the Sisters learned anew the old adage concerning pride and a fall.

Sisters in dire distress.

Many other things, also, were learned at this *pension*—for instance, that it was considered indelicate to refer to the amount of *confiture*, and other extras, purchased, though the quantity which, according to the bills, had been consumed, would have reduced the Food Controller to a state of utter desperation.

As regards the servants, one discovered that many were sensitive and shy, and hated coming to the rooms until assured, by at least three bells, that they would not intrude. During the Sisters' stay at this house, a little party was given for some Imperial friends, several of whom were in residence, and it came to light, at the end of the week, that the extras had accidentally found their way on to the bills of all who lived in the *pension*, each one feeling, as was intended, that she would rather settle the account than broach such a delicate subject.

The private houses were not alone in their unique business methods, for the French laundries had a horror of starting a piece of work until the evening of the day on which it was to be delivered; and the photographer shared a similar aversion to punctuality, which made it impossible for one to receive the reward of one's labours at the time appointed. "*Demain*" was their constant cry.

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Shortly before Christmas two Sisters fell ill, and were straightway despatched to a hospital at Le Touquet, where, during convalescence, they decided to try their hand at golf, hoping to discover a latent talent. At dusk one evening, therefore, three Sisters were seen to emerge from the club. It was rather an unusual time to begin, but they were not proud, so naturally disliked publicity. The first two were more fortunate than the third in driving off, and a group of Tommies, realizing that injury had to be done either to her feelings or their skulls, chose the former, and moved to a place of safety. At this the poor Sister grew desperate, and was just about to give up, when suddenly her ball shot, like a bullet, towards the second hole, but not near it, for it hit the side of a ditch and fell into a stream of dirty water. After it went the Sister in hot pursuit, hoping that the interested onlookers had been unable to follow the ball in its flight; but a muffled sound, to which she had become accustomed during the last quarter of an hour, assured her that she was still under observation. As she grappled for her lost treasure the soft mud clouded the water, and much time was lost before she recovered her ball. Being rather plucky she determined not to turn back, and she could not go forward, according to the rules of the game, so she started, ball in hand, towards her companions, whom she found in a similar predicament. By the time the other balls had been rescued it was dark, so the Sisters turned their faces homeward, wondering how even the simple-minded could enjoy a game of golf.

Nervous Sister. Men retreating at the double.

Early in April, 1915, No. 1 Canadian Stationary Hospital arrived from England, and the tents were erected in a lovely spot, amidst hills which later were a mass of bloom, bluebells and poppies vying with each other in richness of colouring. Fair indeed is France when her fields flash with flaming poppies as though the rich blood of a nation, once spilt, returned again in the blossoms, to decorate the land they loved so well.

There was a railroad not far from the camp, and the coming of a troop-train was heralded far down the line. How they sang, those lads, as they crowded out upon the steps and roofs of the cars!

"They're very light-'earted," said a patient one day. "They'd be proper fed up if they knew what they was goin' to."

"Not 'arf," replied another, as he waved an empty sleeve in their direction.

About a mile inland from Wimereux stands the village of Wimille, the road to

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which lies through a part of the country shaped like a shallow basin, in the midst of surrounding hills. This was a favourite evening walk of many soldiers, who have since found a resting-place not far away. Peace seems to reign everywhere: here a curl of smoke from a farm-house, there a path, losing itself among trees and hedges, or a group of white crosses on the hillside, showing where some humble peasants have been laid to rest. As one saunters homewards along this road tiny lights come out in the windows, and perhaps a train rattles by, thundering between the overlapping hills, and leaving nothing but vapour, like a string of pearls, to remind one that it has passed. Again the peace, the gentle breeze, and the polished moon coming up to keep watch through the night.

Near this place is a church where service was held on Sunday evening. The congregation was small and, at times, the men were allowed to select the hymns. It seemed that their hearts turned back at this time to childhood's days; for the simple verses, sung by little children, were the ones they wanted to hear again. These services, in the little village church, form one of the sweetest memories of Wimereux.

A short distance from Boulogne stands the Château d'Hardelot, an interesting old place, dating from the time of Charlemagne A.D. 810. From a watch-tower one sees a grey, fretted path far below, and the greensward stretching away to the river. Beyond lie the gloomy depths of the Forêt d'Hardelot, and, above this, distant mountains are seen, peeping over the velvety tree-tops, as though trying to catch a glimpse of the ancient ruin.

Fifteen years ago an explorer, while making a tour of the place, discovered an enclosure, in which he found a human skeleton, chained to the wall. It had been there during the reigns of many kings, who were unconscious of its existence.

Leaving Wimereux by the bridge, to the west of the village, a little road runs up over the hill. If one turns to the right at the forking, an iron gate suddenly appears among the trees. This is the entrance to the French cemetery, but other men than French are buried there, and the Englishwomen who were in Boulogne for Easter undertook to decorate these British graves.

Rain fell continuously on Good Friday and Saturday, and, as the long trenches had to be shaped, before any planting could be done, it was necessary to work steadily. Gradually little crosses began to show up against the brown earth, some of pansies, others of violets or daisies, and bunches of daffodils glowed at the foot of each white cross.

Towards the close of the day, a funeral procession came in, and made its way to the open end of the last trench. The service was short, and the "last post" sounded for another departed hero. None of the women knew his name, but all thought of a mother waiting somewhere for a boy who would not return, and they covered his new grave with forget-me-nots.

When Saturday evening came all were stiff and sore, but, as they glanced back through the rain, it made their hearts glad to see the flowers bursting like sunshine from every tomb, and, in feeling cold and tired, they realized that they had done a little for those who had done so much.

Easter morning arrived and still the drizzling rain, but by the afternoon it had cleared sufficiently to hold a service in the cemetery.

During the night several offerings had been left; one, a cross of cheap flowers, tied with a bit of string, bore the touching words, "To the brave soldiers english, from an ally."

What a memory for those who were present! Convalescent patients, Chaplains, Officers, Sisters and Orderlies. It seemed almost as though voices from the other world joined in the praises; and just as the organ sounded the opening chords of "Jesus Christ

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is risen to-day," the sun shone out clear and bright, and all the crosses and flowers were covered with glistening raindrops. Then the breeze stirred the blossoms, and they dropped their tears on the graves. If those in distant homes could have drawn near on that Sunday afternoon, death, for a time at least, would have lost its sting. Before leaving the cemetery a triumphant chorus arose—"For all the Saints who from their labours rest."

In May leave was granted to Paris. The road from Boulogne lies through a country which, at this time of the year, is white with apple-blossoms.

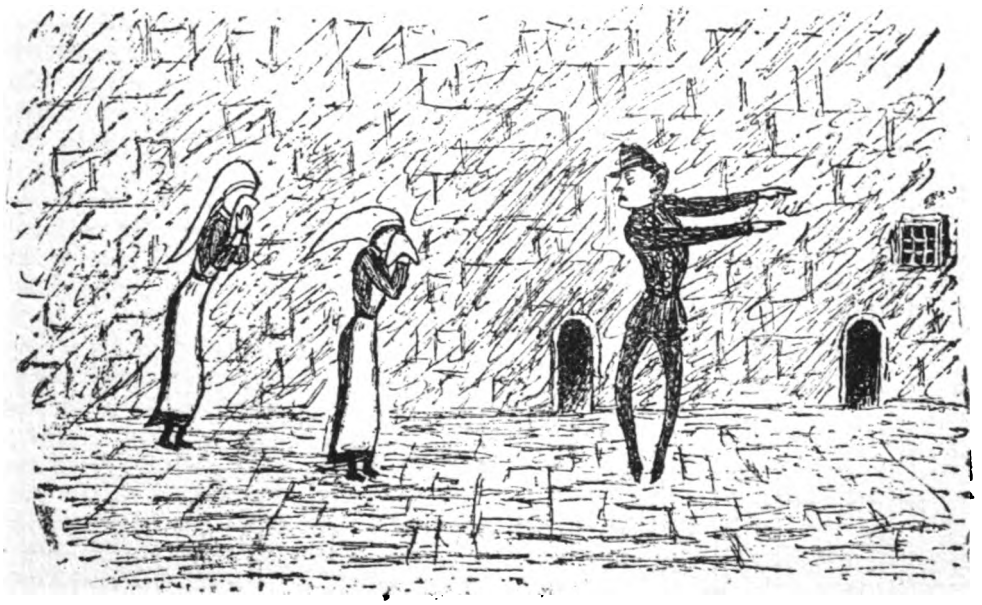
A rather amusing incident occurred *en route* when a British troop-train stopped opposite some carriages filled with French girls. The men, lured by the most fascinating of smiles, swarmed across to give their badges and buttons to the fair damsels; but, on closer inspection, it was discovered that each was paid for by a merry laugh and two plump arms, and—well, it was paid for.

Late in the afternoon the Sisters had their first delightful impression of Paris.

No wonder the Parisian is gay! One is made buoyant by even walking in the Paris streets. London, like many Eastern cities, is always looking back as though it could never forget. New York and other cities of the West abound in energy and unrestrained ambition for the future, but Paris lives for to-day.

On the Rue de la Paix the Sisters kept rigidly to the outside of the windows, but they revelled in Rue de Rivoli. In fact, one very young Sister declared that her chief impression of Paris was a well-known *lingerie* shop in this street, while to her friend, who had seen eight months of active service, the words Paris and bathtub were synonymous.

To the historical Conciergerie Prison came the Sisters, one morning, eager to know as much as possible of its gruesome history. Many facts were lost on them, for the guide had a cleft palate, and deflected



Sisters weeping for unknown reason. Guide explaining something of interest.

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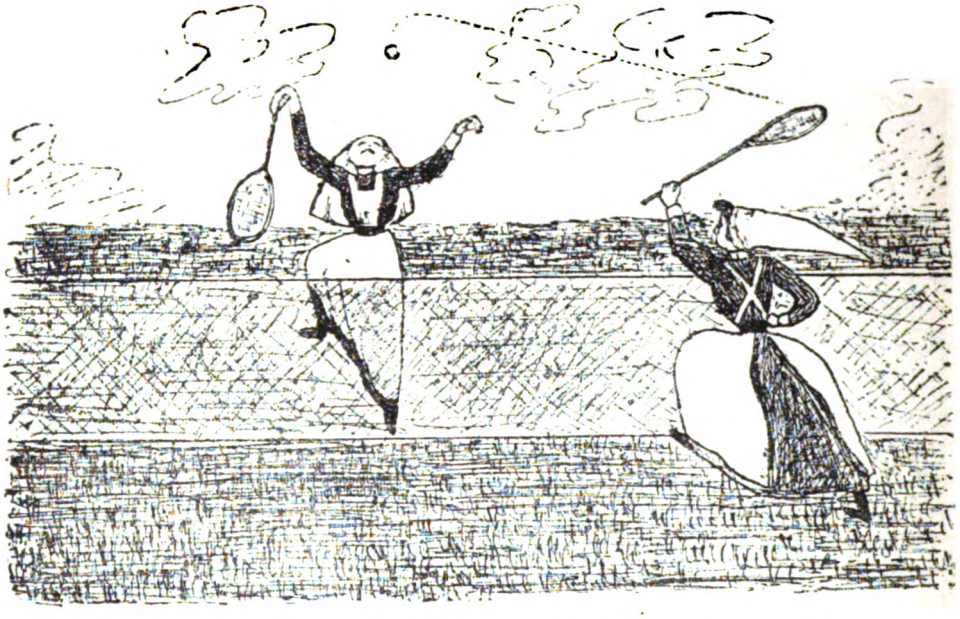

Sister in good form. Left-handed but expert Sister.

septum, and spoke rapidly in French. If they interrupted in the gentlest manner, to ask something of particular interest, he turned a wrathful eye upon them, and began more furiously than ever. Finally they gave up in despair, and tried to follow his facial contortions, but, while assuming the most mournful expression possible, they noticed that his face was lit with a sublime smile; he had stopped talking, and was waiting for them to catch up and appreciate his little joke. Scarcely had they done so, however, when he started on again at top speed, and in a moment there was tragedy written on every line of his face. Evidently they did not grasp the solemnity of the situation, for he shouted fiercely at them several times, until they dropped their eyes and felt for their handkerchiefs.

This was presumably what he wanted, so he continued his story to the end; and the Sisters came away, feeling that they had learned something of guides, if nothing of the Conciergerie Prison.

The last evening was spent in disentangling accounts, which had got somewhat twisted. It was an unromantic way in which to finish a sojourn in Paris; but the Sisters felt that many other visits to this city were ended in just such a way, and the next morning, with heavy hearts and light purses, they made their way to the station.

The hospital was not very busy during the next few weeks, so the Sisters turned their attention to a lighter side of life. There was a tennis-club not far away, and to this they flocked in numbers, the chief benefit of the game being, as far as some were concerned, the quiet night's repose, ensured by violent and continuous exercise.

About this time six Sisters decided to drive to Calais, so they hired two vehicles for the event. These were of the early Victorian style, which one frequently sees in pictures of that time, usually with a hoop-skirted lady standing upon the step, her hand resting upon the wide curving back. They had to call for their turnouts, and the

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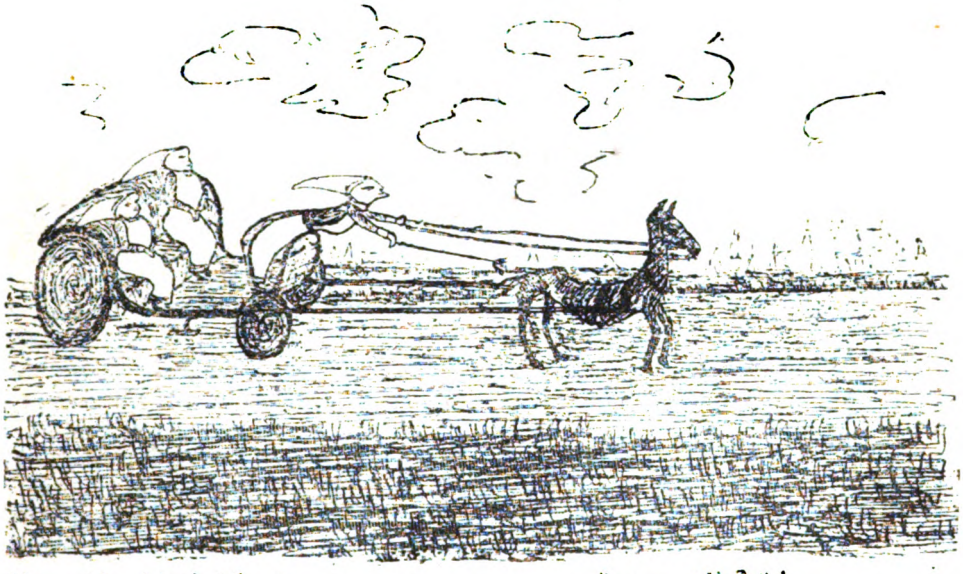
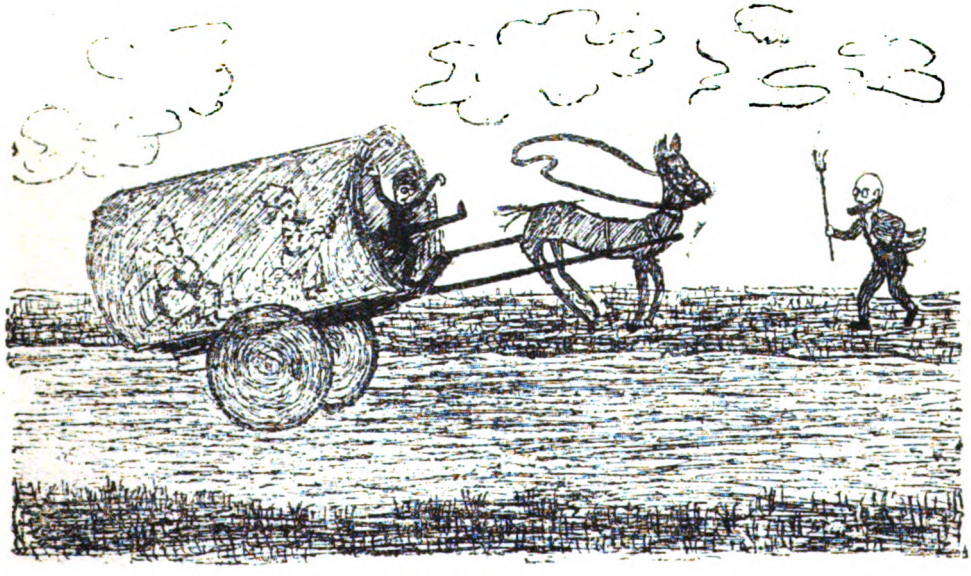


Sisters quietly enjoying the little outing

Horse named "La Belle".

three who arrived first selected the better horse. It was blind in one eye and lame, but the other was more blind and more lame than its fellow. They saw at a glance that there was something curious about the harness, for it was all that one could do, leaning over the dashboard, to touch the horse with the end of the fly-switch, which



Heavy Sisters responsible for accident.

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they had in place of a whip; but they started out gaily.

At the slightest incline, they all tripped out, for they saw that the beasts were unable to stand the strain, and as they passed over the brow of each hill, they leapt back into their places, without arresting the progress of the horses, lest, once stopped, they could not start again. A steam-roller passed, and when the excitement was over they resumed their way, only to find that both horses had become weak in the knees, which resulted in frequent stumbling while on the down grade. It was then thought expedient that the Sisters walk down, as well as up, every hill, by which they lost considerable time.

They had counted on changing horses at a village, but the only available animal was too large for their shafts, so they had to proceed in one of the high, hooded wagons used by the French peasants. Several solid-looking boxes had been placed at the back, and when two rather heavy Sisters were seated, a peculiar expression overspread the animal's features, and it became apparent that, as there were only two wheels to the cart, the poor creature was about to rise in mid air, unless something were done quickly.

There was only time to see the outside of Notre Dame Cathedral before starting home again. The return trip was more successful, the horses probably having visions of a sumptuous feed awaiting them, for hope can never die. While passing the sand-dunes at Ambleteuse a wind storm came up, but, with mottled faces and eyes bloodshot, they rattled merrily on, and were soon in Wimereux. Thus ended their drive to Calais, an experience which, even under these circumstances, the German Emperor would, doubtless, have liked to share.

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CHAPTER III.

THE MEDITERRANEAN.

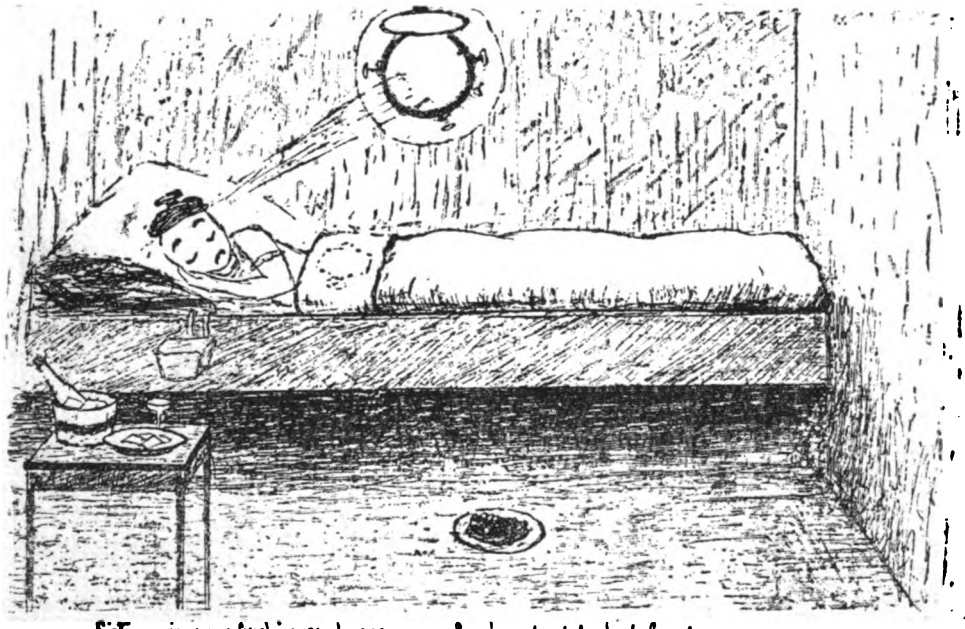
On the 29th of July, 1915, orders arrived to proceed to England, thence to the Dardanelles, and, on the 1st of August, "No 1" embarked on the late H.S. *Asturias*, and sailed away to play its small part in the Gallipoli story. Little need be said of the Bay of Biscay, for its effect on human physiology is well known. Once in calmer waters all began to take a new interest in life. No one, it appeared, had been actually ill, but a general weariness had pervaded the ship, the passengers finding it necessary to retire for little naps from time to time.

Gibraltar was passed at midnight, and the next morning the rocky coast of Spain was seen, stretching away in a high tableland, the aroma of its pine forests coming on the land breeze. On the following day, the graceful Sierra Nevada came into view, its hoary head glimmering faintly against the unbroken blue.

People wandered happily about the ship, or sat watching the silver arrow she made in the water. The wind was fresh, and it was hard to realize that those for whose sake the hospital was coming were fighting and falling, far away on the Gallipoli shores.

In the evening little groups watched the stars come out, in sky and sea, or listened to soft music from the lounge within, nor dreamed that many faces looked up from dark trenches, to those same stars, in last prayer, for a great advance was coming with the morning.

On Sunday, the 8th of August, the ship dropped anchor not far from Malta. Very beautiful it looked, with its lacy spires gleaming in the early morning sun, like a miniature model of a city, carved in white stone, floating upon the surface of the blue Mediterranean. The buildings of Valetta seemed to be piled one upon another, for



Sister enjoying refreshing sea-breeze Lunch ordered by kind friend.

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the town is built on a steep hill, which rises abruptly from the water's edge. No shore leave was granted, as the ship was ordered full steam ahead to Alexandria.

Service was held, and prayers offered for those in danger, but none knew that at dawn, on this very morning, our gallant troops had stormed Chunuk and Koja Chemen, and those who were left were waiting, through the slowly passing hours, for the men from Suvla Bay who never came.

On Chunuk and Koja Chemen
They were seen in grim array,
When the Eastern sun was blazing,
Tongues were parched and minds were crazing,
With their eyes towards Suvla Bay.

What of those on whom they counted,
While the moments slipped away?
For the piles of dead and dying
Round the parapets were lying,
Facing all towards Suvla Bay.

Morning, afternoon and nightfall,
Holding till the East grew grey,
Till they fell, with hope unshaken,
And their shattered lines were taken—
Not by men from Suvla Bay.

Division of labour in Egypt.

Two days later, about five o'clock in the morning, the ship arrived at Alexandria, and, from her decks, one could see palm-trees rising faintly on the horizon, like a golden gateway to a land of the sunrise, too glorious and unreal to be part of this world. An hour or so later she entered the harbour.

Flitting everywhere were little boats with lateen sails of pink or blue, each laden with fruit, and containing one or more dusky natives in their unique dress, consisting of a shirt, wide sash, baggy trousers fastened at the ankle, and the Mohammedan *fez*.

Coming near to the land one sees indolent-looking natives, gazing with expressionless, passive faces, their graceful figures swathed in gaudy attire. The women, excepting their eyes, are draped in black, though the weather is sultry; their finger-nails are red with henna, and their hands like leather. They seem to do most of the work, and carry tremendous bundles on their heads, or children on their shoulders; the men, except in the bazaars, sell flowers or postcards, act as guides, drive *garries*, or do anything requiring little or no physical exertion.

Buildings, bleached by the sun, are crowded together, facing any direction; those near the water are flat-roofed and low, with narrow arched windows and doorways, while others, further back, are more elaborate with minarets and domes. Everything seems well-baked and dry, except the tall palm-trees, standing in little groups between the houses, where they can find room.

Driving to the English quarter one passes through narrow streets, decorated, during

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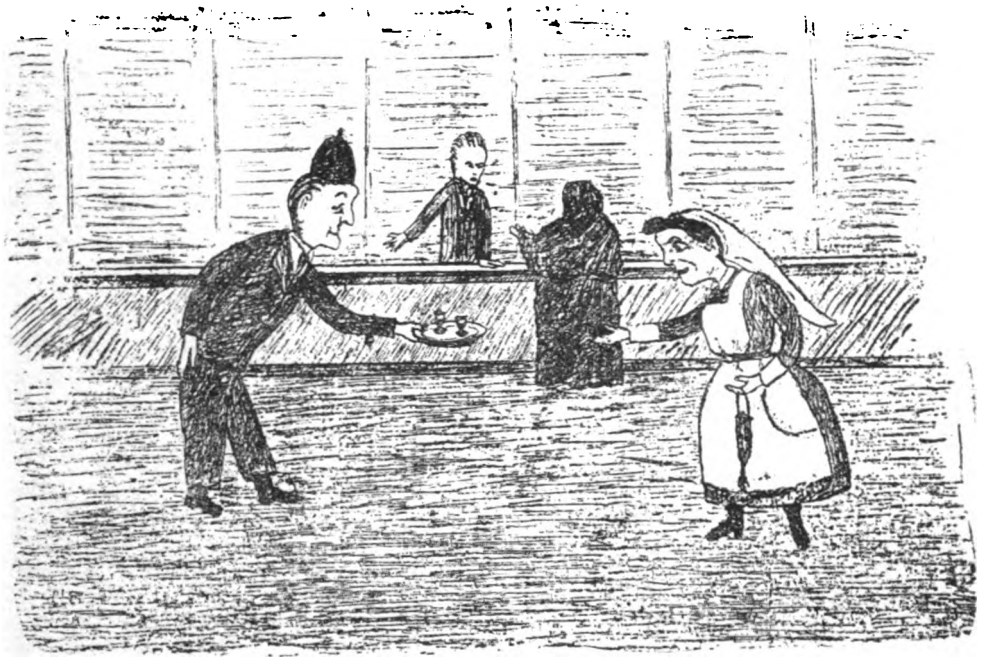
the Mohammedan Christmas season, in August, with banners and red flags. Bazaars encroach on the pavements, filled with natives busily engaged at card-playing. Both here and along the streets men are smoking *hookah* pipes. Brilliant awnings are stretched over the causeway, where many are lying asleep, with or without mattresses, reminding one of Bible times; and children usually blind in one or both eyes, play among the filthy garbage. There are many beautiful Turkish women, wearing the thin white *yashmak*, which gives such an alluring appearance to the little mouths beneath.

The tiny cups of Turkish coffee, served to customers in the shops, as a matter of course, were fully appreciated by the Sisters.

During the day, orders were received to sail the next morning for Lemnos. *En route* for the ship, some Sisters stopped to take a photograph of a bazaar, but the natives rushed out and surrounded the carriage, refusing to let it proceed until they had received remuneration for posing!

If one stops in the streets of this ancient city, with its oriental confusion, high-toned street cries, and degraded humanity, something steals over one's senses from "Far, far away like bells at evening pealing." One sees not only Alexandria, but, through it, to the dark Mohammedan world; and one appreciates something of what lay before those who undertook its enlightenment, labouring under its shadow, for the moral or physical uplifting of its unfortunate people.

The following day, "No. 1" embarked on the H.S. *Delta*. They cheered the late *Royal Edward* as she passed out of the



Clerk, only too glad to offer coffee Sister, accepting same with gratitude.

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harbour, but before another port had been reached, a ship was seen returning with the survivors of that fated vessel.

Sailing up the Ægean Sea, each succeeding island seems more rocky and desolate than the last, yet all appear to be surrounded by an atmosphere of mystery, as though suddenly risen from the sea.

The ship arrived at Mudros Harbour, and the passengers were transferred by lighter to the late H.S. *Simla*, suffering at the time from a wartime economy of scrubbing-brushes and disinfectants, which condition, unfortunately, was rectified later! Shortly afterwards the H.S. *Scotia*, filled with wounded, was tied to the windward side, and, added to this, the heat, notwithstanding the punkahs, made matters almost unbearable.

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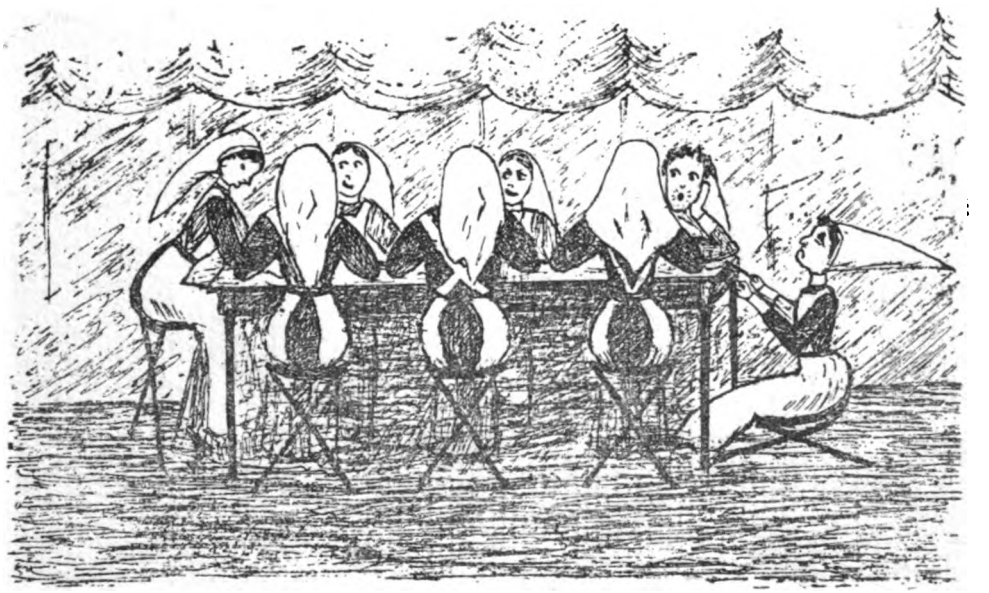
CHAPTER IV.

LEMNOS.

CAN anyone who set foot on the Island of Lemnos, on that summer day, ever forget the stones, the dust, and the flies? A British camp straggled up the long slope to the right and, to the left, a company of Egyptians were busy making roads. Some, with baskets on their arms, were collecting stones, which others, with long-handled discs, were pounding into place, swaying their bodies to a sort of chant. One man was lounging about, making good use of his well-developed biceps and long whip, while another was carrying a pail of water, giving a drink to each in turn, and striking them on the head when he thought they had had sufficient.

At last camp was reached. The tents had been pitched in a quadrangle, and the unloading was going on rapidly in the middle. As far as one could see, the ground was covered with stones and stubble, and looked like the actual end of the world.

Instructions, regarding "limits," and the punishment entailed by "breaking camp," were clearly defined, quarters were assigned, and all set about preparing the first meal. There were not enough camp-stools to go around, so one was constructed of sticks and some elastic material which stretched, according to the weight placed upon it, allowing the occupant to sink, at times, almost to floor-level; but the chair was not without its advantages for it brought the Sisters promptly to the table, in order to avoid being the unfortunate "last in." The family were scarcely seated on the first evening when it was noticed that two places were vacant. Looking out they discovered, to their horror, two of their most self-respecting and intelligent Sisters, posing on the sky-line, "On the way to see something of the Island." A Sister, who was



Sisters enjoying biscuits

Poor Sister who has arrived late

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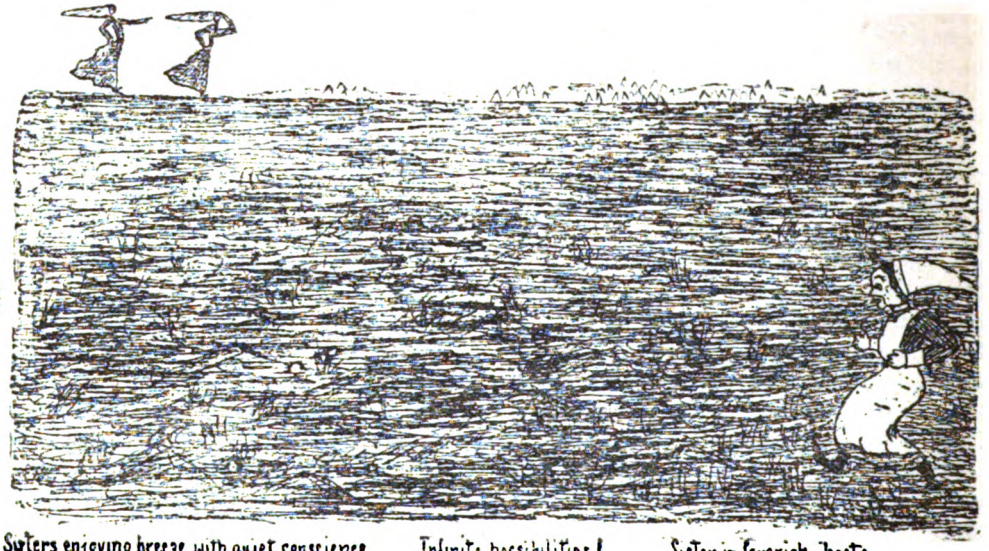

Sisters enjoying breeze with quiet conscience. Infinite possibilities! Sister in feverish haste.

speedily despatched, caught them just as they came within sight of a column of troops and, it was whispered later, a bathing parade, and they were borne back in triumph from the perilous unknown.

The tents were chaotic, as everything was buried under reams of paper and empty

The "Sisters' Boon" variety of collapsable basin. The "Sisters' Boon" variety of collabsable chair.

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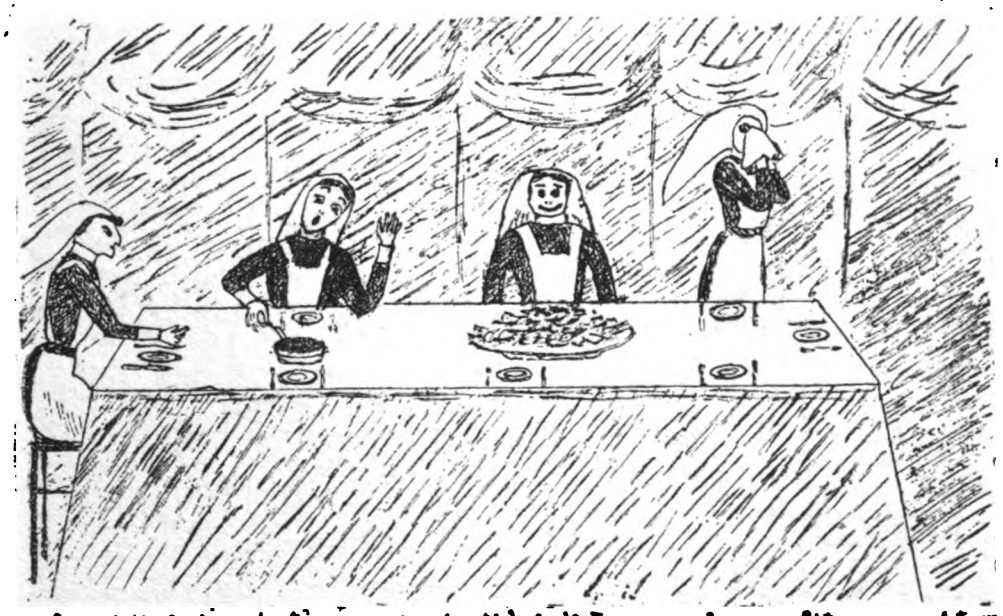
boxes, the result of the shopping expedition in Alexandria.

Gradually, little specks of light came out through the dusk, outlining the surrounding camps, and, as the night wore on, the moon rose, so dazzling and powerful that it was impossible to sleep. Many stole out of their tents and stood spellbound, for the place appeared to be enchanted, and, looking up, the moon and stars all seemed to have drawn near to the earth. A flock of Indian sheep wandered slowly towards the camp, their bells tinkling through the stillness, and, as they passed, they stared at the strange creatures, who had come to desecrate their pastures.

In the morning, through the open flap of the tent, the ground could be seen sloping down to a sheet of water, and beyond, rough land rose, undulating, to the distant mountains, standing defiant and austere. The atmosphere was so clear that one could see for miles. Here and there, over bleak stretches of brown, Greek villages were scattered, their small white houses snuggled away on clusters of green, giving the impression of a panoramic scene on a stage-curtain.

Breakfast was not particularly appetizing.

Shortly after its arrival the hospital received a convoy of dysentery cases. Provisions were short and there was a scarcity of water, which fell especially hard on these men. One hesitated, to gather courage, before passing down the long rows of tightly packed beds, where sunken eyes were focused on every one who went by, or parched tongues held out in silent entreaty, yet for hours at a time there was not a drop of water to be had.



Sisters looking for flies under flies Sister, forgetful of self, Trying to enjoy bacon Sister on verge of tears

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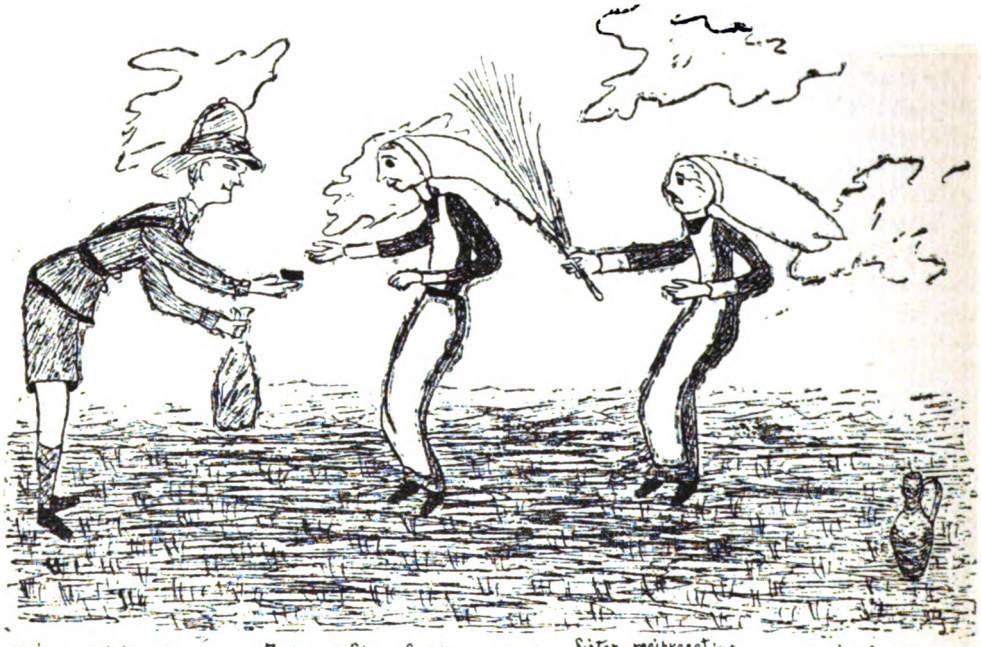

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In a hospital near by, to which some of the Sisters were sent, pending the arrival of their own staff, things were even worse. Flies swarmed everywhere, until, at times, the ground seemed to rise and fall like a grey blanket.

In the medical wards the worst cases lay on Egyptian wicker beds, which raised them about a foot from the ground, while others were stretched out, weak and exhausted, on a ground sheet and blanket. Nets, which were scarce, acted as fly-catchers, so that the patients were better off without them.

The Medical Officers and Orderlies worked day and night, but were unable to cope with such numbers, and the absence of trained nurses made matters doubly hard; yet in the midst of it all there was not a tent without its would-be Punchinello. Men with one arm challenged each other in a boxing-match, and those who had lost legs were keen on racing.

One frequently heard that "The Turks fought like gentlemen," and the men considered themselves luckier than their friends who were fighting the Huns. There was never a word of complaint from these Gallipoli heroes, for they all felt, as one of them nobly said, "It's worth living or dying for, is this old Empire of ours."

In the Sisters' Mess bacon was the chief fare for some time, and dripping the sole representative of the fat family, it being considered frivolous to even think of butter. At last a benefactor bought a cheese from one of the ships in the harbour, which the Sisters enjoyed for many days, either as background or flavouring, in every dish that emerged from the cook-house; but when, on the appearance of cheese jelly, a meek-eyed Sister asked if there was a known antidote for cheese poisoning, the discouraged Mess Sister resigned.

Fortunately their friends were not forgetful at this crucial time, and, occasionally, a bag of beans, or tins of sardines, were

Cook thinking of chicken broth.

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brought, in lieu of the sweets and flowers of happier days.

About this time a small cask of lime-flavoured drinking-water was presented to the Mess. It was splendid to behold three Orderlies struggling with the treasure, and pulling it into the tent, where it would keep cool, and furnish a refreshing drink from time to time. The Sisters stood in an admiring circle, and then went off to dream of drowning in drinking water. In the morning they came again to see the cask, but, alas! it was quite empty, for the contents had leaked through a hole in the side, and all that remained was a small pool of the precious water beneath.

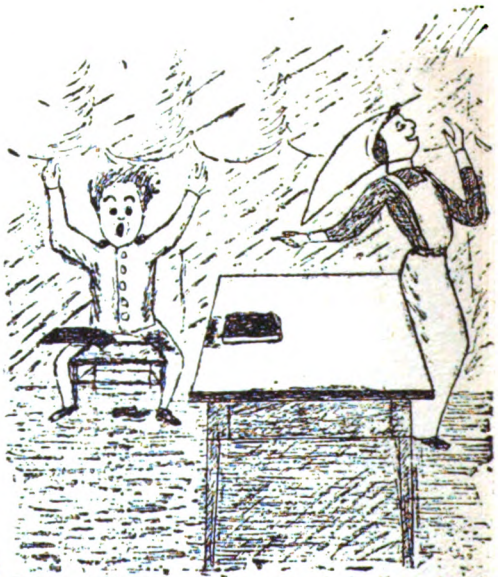
The cook-house stove being in an open field, punctuality of meals depended on the absence of clouds. The cook, a French Canadian, with large brow and small kindly eyes, seemed to have an understanding with his primitive arrangement. Once, when rain had put a temporary lull on operations in the kitchen, the timid Mess Sister came to inquire as to the progress of the chicken broth, for the hen, alias chicken, was strutting unconcernedly around.

"Dere de ol' hen and here de fire," said the cook, "so ver' soon der be some good brot." But the city-bred Sister glanced nervously in its direction.

"Hush," she whispered fearfully, "the hen can hear every word you say."

It was rather hard, at times, to think out an assortment of dishes, especially in the line of cakes, so flour and custard powder had to be twisted into a variety of shapes, and a greater variety of names.

With much gratitude the Sisters recall a young Naval Officer of H.M.S. *Blenheim*, who brought his personal weight to bear upon a cake which had remained in the oven somewhat over time. The Mess Sister was almost in tears at the prospect of an empty table, but the gallant Officer stuck bravely to his task. Suddenly the chocolate filling oozed from between the unyielding slabs, and the whole concern



'Sister fearing the worst. "Naval Officer "doing his bit". Excited Officer. Sister ashamed of outburst of mirth

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On laundry morning.

Returned Laundry. Same Sister crying in anguish

The laundry man..

Sister washing her own little odds and ends.

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slid on to his snowy trousers. The Sister was mortified, and deluged him with boiling soap-suds, but the chocolate refused to disappear, and the Officer entered the Mess-tent with drenched apparel and badly-scalded limbs. It was an experience which might prove amusing when "swapping lies" in the Ward-room; but many beheld him with sadness during the afternoon, hoping that he was not dependent upon the Lemnos laundries to restore him to his original purity.

Sister looking out for missing collars.

As time went on, No. 1 made many friends on Lemnos, but none were more welcome in the Mess than the Officers of H.M.S. *Blenheim*, H.M.S. *Glory*, and the late H.M.S. *Cornwallis*, who were the first to make life worth living on the island, always cheerful when surroundings were dull, and providing food when provisions were scarce. No one can forget, either, the delightful tea-parties on one or other of these floating fortresses, where, for a time, one exchanged the heat and flies on shore for shady decks and cool breezes.

Horse enjoying a little bolt.

On one occasion the band of H.M.S. *Glory* gave a concert for the patients; it was a strange contrast to see the Mess-tent filled with blue and khaki, and hear the music, as though a garden-party were in full swing, and then look out upon the rough hills, where nothing but tents could be seen for miles.

Two weeks after arrival on the Island a Canadian Sister died. They laid her in a rocky bit of ground, staked out for the British soldiers, under the shadow of the Greek church. There were no flowers, nor even a blade of grass, so the graves were outlined in stones. It was a lonely spot in which to leave a friend, and one felt that the years would come and go and no one would be near but the peasants, passing between the villages, and the wild donkey-boys running by.

A week later another Sister died, and several patients in the same hospital. Indeed, at that time, many soldiers were buried in this place, and at night, when living things seemed far away, and dead things all seemed near, one wondered how many more would have found a resting-place before the moon would again trail over the mountain. In the early morning, too,

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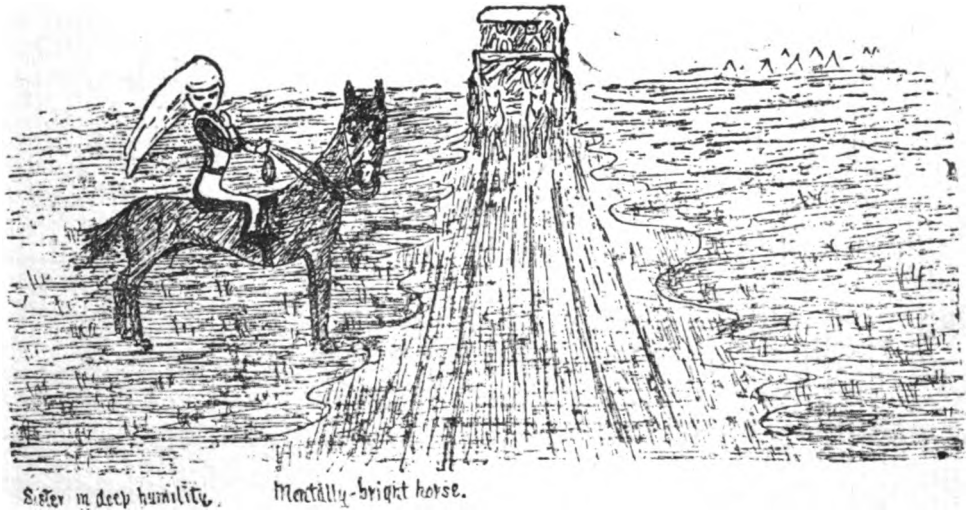
when camp-fires were kindled, and their tiny columns of smoke rose like incense, it brought the thought of sacrifice; but always when the sky brightened, and rosy shafts of light burst from the horizon, things seemed to speak of the great reward of sacrifice, of youth and joy and freedom too deep for death to destroy, because they came from God, and had returned to God. In another part of the Island was a Mohammedan graveyard with sticks on which were written quotations from the Koran. Near the camp was a wide stretch of sand used for riding, and one day three Sisters started out in keen rivalry. The first had scarcely started when her horse bolted, tossing her farther and farther upon its head. In an instant soldiers were running from everywhere, calling directions. With trembling arms she tried to squeeze the horse's neck, hoping to choke him, but this unkind act invited the final lunge, and the next moment she was skidding along the ground. The second horse trotted in a seemly and ladylike manner, and the Sister riding it chuckled with inward joy. But the third, being straight from the plough, sauntered casually in a circle despite the fierce kicks and exhortations of the exasperated Sister. Finally, she was in the depths of despair, for she had hoped to cut off the approaching line of mule-wagons with great dash. "Do go on, dear," she sobbed absently. This gentle persuasion was not without effect, but when they reached the road the horse stopped emphatically, and gazed up and down with marked interest, evidently thinking that this was a procession

Horse appearing wild to suit taste of Sister.



Sister in deep humility. Mentally-bright horse.

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Sister with punctuality record. Sister advising new-comer of whereabouts of Mess. Sister listening to bugler.

which they had been hurrying to see. In utter sadness the Sister turned homewards, where she was met by a row of patients.

"I knows yer 'orse, Sister," said one of them. "'E comes from our camp, and we calls 'im 'Stand at Ease!'"

A Day in Camp

Réveillé! At first faintly on the wind, then clearer from surrounding camps, and finally, the silvery notes burst forth from less than twenty yards away.

Patient a little late. Boy stealing basins from absent-minded friends. Friend offering soap. Patient enjoying cool wash.

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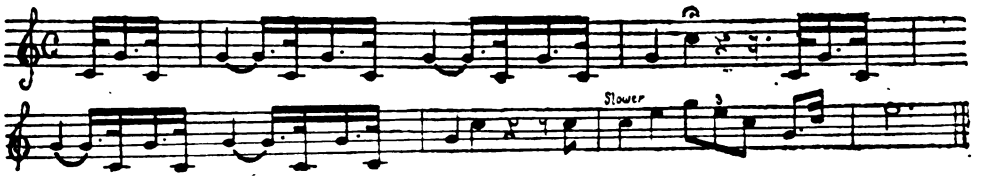

"I wish that bugler would not blow so loudly," moans a Sister, as she turns sleepily in her bed. "If he isn't careful he will have every one awake."

"Half-past six. Oh, dear!" comes in a plaintive wail from the next tent; but, as breakfast is at seven, there is not much time to lose.

The patients are washed, and their beds made, when the Sisters come on duty.

"Now, then, Orderly, get your dishes washed. Don't stand there talking, and it's against orders to smoke in the wards."

A sloppy salute from the Orderly, when the Sister's back is turned, a general hastening from all quarters to the scene of action and the dish-washing proceeds, accompanied by a falsetto rendering of "The Spaniard Who Blighted my Life."

"Number 24, have you taken your breakfast?"

"Yes, Sister," from Number 24.

"No, Sister," from surrounding beds.

"'E is just after havin' it repeat on 'im," explains a bullet-headed man in the corner.

"Back on fluids," announces the Sister, and Number 24 aims a boot at his bullet-headed friend.

The wards are easily straightened, for each man is willing to tidy his own locker, and that of his neighbour if necessary.

Then come medicines, generally quite unappreciated by the lay mind, but considered an expedient towards recovery by all good Tommies.

Temperatures are the next item. "One short," says the Sister, as she seizes the glass containing the fragile thermometers.

"A Night Orderly done that," mutters a patient.

"That's right, blame the Orderly," calls a day member of that brotherhood, from the end of the ward.

"Is mine above 100?" asks a lad anxiously.

"You should never ask your temperature."

"I know how to read thermometers," says Number 8, who is strongly suspected of scrimshanking.

"Do you really?" inquires the Sister.

"Yes, I was an Orderly in a hospital in India for three years."

"How splendid! Do you know anything about treatments or dressings?"

"Yes, I used to do all kinds of work," boasts Number 8, with much swank.

"What a help you will be about the ward. I wonder if the Medical Officer will mark you up to-day." The Sister turns away, and Number 8 falls back in a swoon. By the time "Rounds" are made Number 8 is feeling much worse, and the following morning he is suffering from a complete relapse.

The Medical Officer moves slowly down the line, followed by the Sister, book in hand. A new patient sits bolt upright, eyeing the M.O. nervously.

"What is the trouble?" The patient is evidently slightly deaf, and the M.O. repeats his question in measured tones. The patient looks startled.

"Di-agonised as neralgy," he whispers in confidence.

"Have you had any medicine?" asks the M.O.

"Only chloride o' lime."

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The M.O. raises his eyebrows perplexedly.

"Well, it *might* o' been qui-nine," says the patient, dubiously. "It sounded somethin' like that anyway."

On goes the M.O., not realizing how much hangs on his hasty scrawl at the foot of the chart. Number 48 tries to follow the movements of his hand. Number 48's wife has died and his children are to be scattered. Surely Fate will be kind.

"How would you like a sea voyage?" asks the M.O.

Number 48's eyes brighten. "Me, sir?"

"No, you," says the M.O., pointing to the man in the next bed.

"You're marked for Convalescent Camp," he continues, turning to Number 48. "What would you go home for?"

This is a last chance. "My wife——" begins Number 48, but something chokes him.

"Did you speak?" asks the M.O.

"No, sir." The M.O. passes. Fate has decided against him.

After "Rounds" come the usual treatments, or dressings if the ward be surgical.

Ward supplies arrive from the Steward's Stores, the sugar generously interspersed with tea, and a shortage of eggs and milk. An Orderly is immediately despatched for eggs 6 (six), and milk Ideal tin 1 (one); and a wave of gloom sweeps over the ward as it becomes evident that the Quartermaster's meritorious frugality, whether for the Government or his personal friends, has once more subjected him to uncharitable remarks.

An old soldier is having his admission bath, and coughs frequently. His hands and feet are grimy.

"You've a bad cough, chum," commiserates a patient. The soldier smiles, but does not speak. Later, it is learned that he has done sentry duty on cold nights, without a greatcoat. Judging from his face, he belongs to the class of men who are found frozen to death at their posts. In time his chart is marked "H.S.," and

Orderly fearing to return, empty handed, yet feeling small in presence of Corporal.
Honest looking boy telling base lie to trusting Orderly regarding Sergeant's absence.
Unguarded entrance.

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he boards a hospital ship to take his chance.

Dinner, which is always a quandary, is announced by "Cook-house."

"Give this to Number 15," commands the Sister.

"Number 15 'ad 'is dinner."

"What did you give him?"

"Ordinary diet."

"Ordinary diet!" The Sister drops her spoon and hastens to Number 15's bed. "Where is your dinner?" she demands.

"I 'aven't 'ad none." She darts to the kitchen.

"Orderly, Number 15 says he has had no dinner."

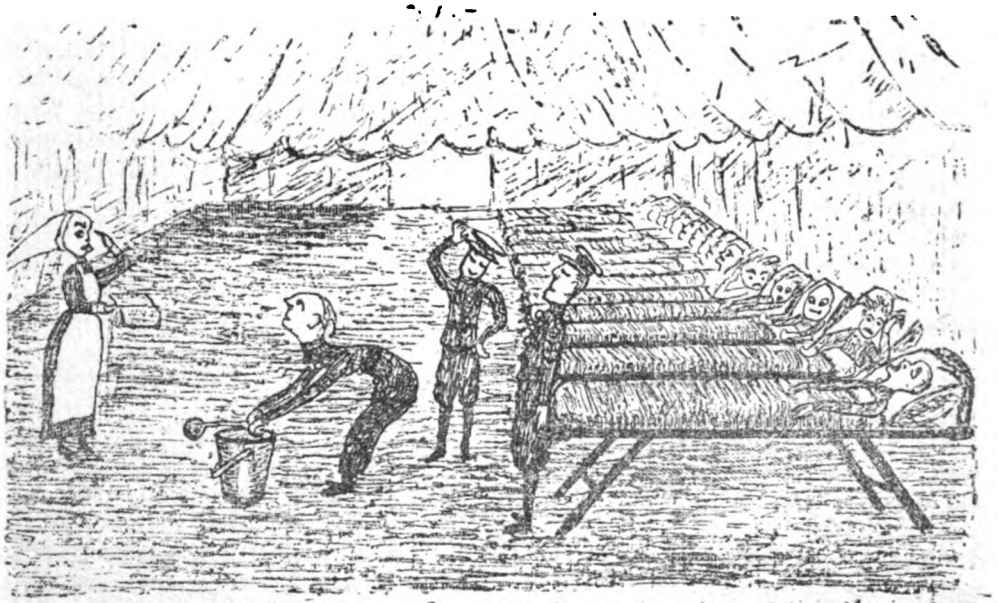
"Then 'e is lyin', Sister." Back march Sister and Orderly to poor Number 15. "What are ye after tellin' the Sister sich a lie fer?" challenges the Orderly.

"Where is your dinner?" persists the Sister.

Number 15 turns white with fear. "It's et up," he announces solemnly.

While returning to the kitchen the Sister notices a patient who is on the Danger List devouring a cocoanut-pie with the greatest relish. Who is culpable? One of the Orderlies. The offending one is discovered. He will be up for office in the morning, for repeated disobedience, and he shudders at the possibility of rejoining his friends at the Detention Camp!

Has the other Orderly ever smuggled anything to the patients? Never. The man in the second bed grabs wildly at his



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Escort forced to deal harshly with friend
Prisoner carrying hollow loaf of bread filled with cigarettes.
Escort realising gravity of situation.

locker, and tucks a bag of pastry under his puttees. He has been an Orderly, and knows how it feels to have small kindnesses to the patients so grossly misunderstood.

"Please, Sister, I'm sick of Extry Diet," complains one man. "There ain't nothin' extry in it at all. It's starvation diet, an' the 'ospital is pocketin' the profits. I'm goin' to keep my Missus on it when I gets 'ome," he adds bitterly.

"You probably do now," comes in icy tones from the next bed.

Another claims that the milk is sour. Then two, who have nearly emptied their mugs, suddenly realize the same fact, while a fourth, who had drained his to the last drop, becomes aware of a lump of lead in his stomach, and will report it to the Orderly Officer.

"Fancy feedin' the troops on sour milk," sympathizes an onlooker. "It's jus' the like o' that that 'ave brought me where I is to-day. If I was cut up careful like, there might be enough o' me to make two decent tins o' bully, but I doubt it."

A young Scotch lad has not had his custard. It is his turn, and he demands his rights.

"It is too late now," says the Sister. "Will an eggflip do?" The Sister happens to come from the north of the Tweed, so Scottie is appeased.

"Sister," calls an Orderly, as the dishes are being collected. "This 'ere patient 'asn't taken 'is arrowroot."

"I'm fed up with the 'ole bloomin' business," pleads the patient.

"Just a little," coaxes the Sister, holding the cup to his lips.

"It's makin' me worse," the mutinous one splutters, as he swallows each mouthful.

But the Sister does not see it that way. "It's for your own good," she insists kindly, and the exasperated boy is again inveigled into emptying the entire cup, thus, he is convinced, minimizing his chance of recovery; but what is to be done when stubborn

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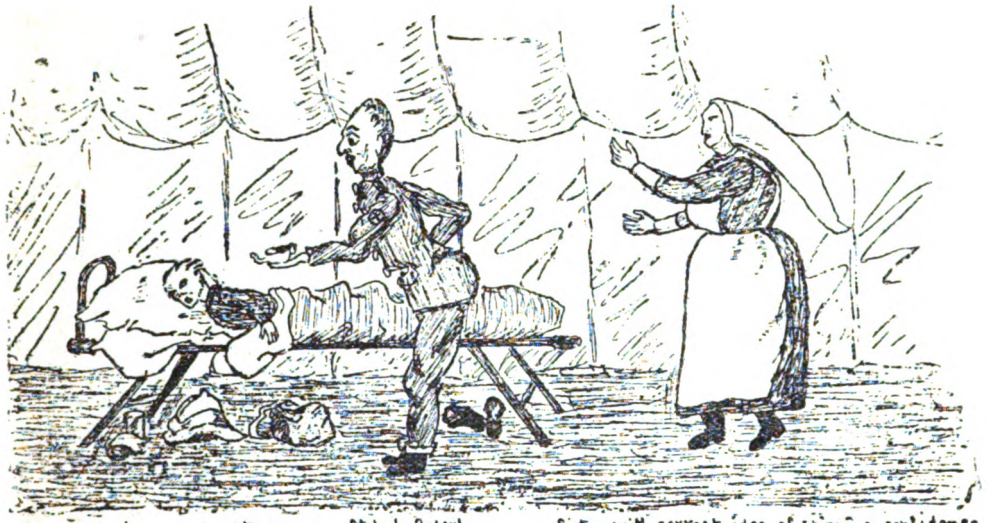

Nursing Sisters and Orderlies are in league against one.

The enchanting call " Letters " comes on the wind, and it is learned that, by some fluke, there is to be mail on mail day ! A large number of letters are brought in, and some parcels, mostly for men who have gone to Convalescent Camp.

" Sergeant," calls the Sister, running to the door, " what are they doing in the Orderly Room ? " and she hands him the letters.

" Give it to 'im, Sister," comes from a Lance-Corporal beside the door. " The Sergeants is altogether too important these days ; they gives me the pip." The Lance-Corporal is always talking, usually adding to the list of those who give him the pip. He has frequently told the ward, individually and collectively, that the War Office would fain have thrust a commission into his unwilling hands, but he prefers the ranks —not that the Army couldn't do with a few good officers. He has only met one to speak of since he joined up, and that one was killed shortly afterwards. " They were bad enough in France," laments the Lance-Corporal, " but if the King only noo what was wearin' of 'is uniform out 'ere, 'e'd chuck up 'is throne."

The Lance-Corporal has a scheme which would bring the war to a triumphant conclusion in the near future, but he cannot take time to explain it except that, as a start, he would increase the rum issue and decrease the jam, nôt, perhaps, that of the strawberry variety, which, he swears, is consumed in shocking quantities in every Sergeants' Mess.

In civil life he lives on one of the King's estates, quite a chummy relationship evidently existing between the two, until one fateful day when " along comes the King, tellin' me as 'im and the country needed me," and thus he had been brutally torn from his family, and pushed into action in the Army Service Corps.

As the gramophone has arrived, the Lance-Corporal and his views are forgotten, and a song, rich in sentiment, gushes out to an appreciative audience. After this comes a medley of patriotic airs, including the National Anthem. A little private turns his head away ; it seems as though all the suffering that he has endured floods over

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him again at the sound of those familiar chords, but somehow they seem worth it all now, and—" How about ' Another Little Drink ? ' " suggests a discerning old Sergeant-Major.

The man who is selecting the records holds up one to the ward ; " 'Ere's a good 'un fer after," he chuckles, winking at his friends. Several other selections, which apparently come in this class, are likewise put aside, to await the exit of the Sister.

Opposite the Lance-Corporal is a lad with an open expression, and a scarcity of front teeth. His arms are elaborately tattooed with serpents, anchors, and clasped hands. On one shoulder is an interesting group, a girl's head, a wine glass, dice and a pack of cards, with the words " Man's ruin " printed beneath. He also bears a large cross, " In loving memory of my dear mother. Died——" The Sister looks sadly at this lad, who hides his sorrow under a feigned hilarity.

" 'Ow do you like it ? " he asks, surveying it with pride.

" It's beautiful."

" The colours is rather good," he remarks modestly.

" How well he hides his feelings," murmurs the Sister, gently stroking his head. " Poor boy ! how long has your mother been dead ? "

" She ain't dead at all," exclaims the youth, surprised at the Sister's ignorance ; " they gives yer a choice when yer tattooed, and this 'ere was the prettiest one as they 'ad. I can fill in the date when she dies. Mebbe ye'd like to see the king and queen on me chist," he adds, preparing to remove his shirt.

" I'm sure it's effective," the Sister assures him, as she turns away.

Half way down the ward is the " suspect " who is shunned by all.

" Orderly, will you get me a drink ? " lisps an infant-in-arms.

Scotland Yardish Officer quietly observing. Spy under arrest for preferring sausages to bully beef. Sister shrinking from being a witness. Rude patient listening to every word of private investigation.

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"Git a drink fer 'im," calls the Orderly to an "up patient."

"Orderly, what do you mean by asking a heart-case to do your work?"

"The baby ain't my case," argues the Orderly. "'E belongs to Smith."

"Where is Smith?"

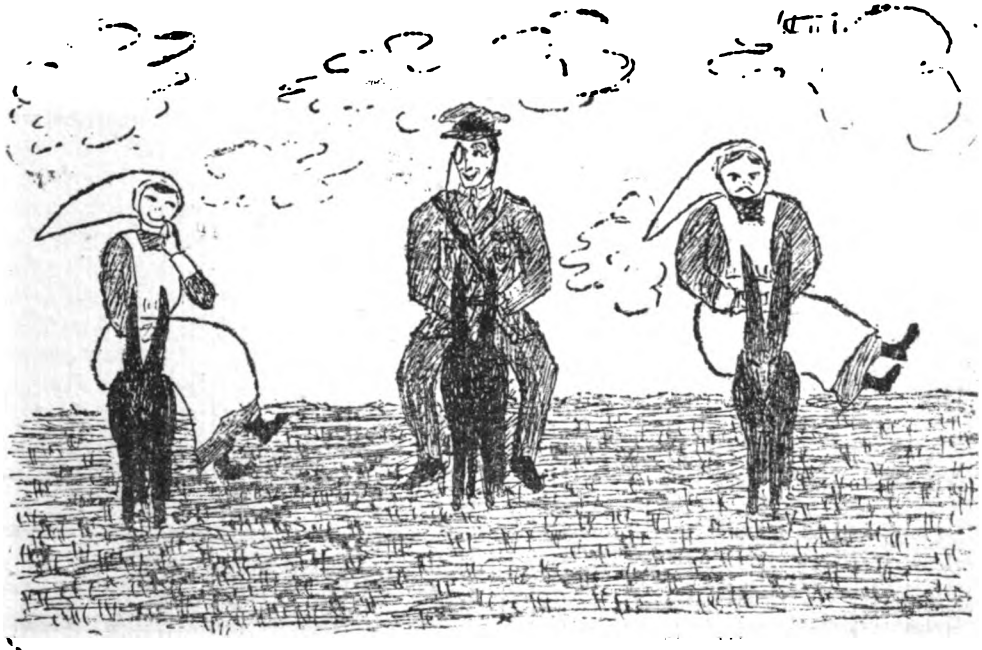
"Been down seein' about kits all day. 'E is tryin' to make a unsuccessful Ward Orderly, so 'e'll be put on fatigues. All the bad uns gits the easy jobs, an' knocks off durin' the 'eat o' the day," he adds with injured mien. This sounds bad indeed, and the Sister will see that Smith gets what is coming to him for imposing on his down-trodden friend.

"You are a good Orderly," she asserts encouragingly. "I told the Wardmaster so only yesterday"; but by this time the Orderly is out of earshot in the direction of the drinking water.

At 4.30 the Sisters relieve each other for tea. The large marquee is a picture of cosiness with its many cushions, rock-and-tin fire-place, which, nevertheless, throws out a hospitable blaze, and pink candle-shades lending a charming touch of domesticity.

As there are only three places of this kind on the island, officers come from far and near, until the tent is packed, and each Sister trying to entertain five or six men, successfully or unsuccessfully as the case may be. Every one seems happy, for the tea-hour is greatly appreciated by all who are so far away from home.

At last the sun drops behind the mountains, and a flood of glory fills the sky, as the autumn day draws to a close. A Sister is standing outside talking to a little group of friends, and the gramophone is heard in the tent, though most of the guests have gone. Two officers come out, spring on their horses, and away they go across the stubble to the



Officer in precarious position.

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wide road, where a stone-crusher is at work; they turn and look at the sunset, and then jog slowly over the hill. A tall Subaltern appears, his face flushed from the warmth of the fire; he snaps his eyes and laughs. "It's cold," he says, turning up his big collar as he strides off. Then one of the group announces that he is expecting marching orders, and the party breaks up.

One boy remains. He is leaving tomorrow for the Peninsula and is keen to go into action. "How should I feel afterwards," he says, "if I had not taken my chance with the rest?" If British blood flows in his veins, how shall he not do his bit, and do it well! "Perhaps we shall meet some day in England, after the war, *if* I am lucky." He smiles as he salutes, and turns away to the West.

Sister playing costume.

Distinct in the clear evening light, peaks of innumerable tents are seen, massed in sections on the plain, or up in the hollows of the hills. Fires are burning everywhere, surrounded by groups of busy men. Some are preparing for departure in the early morning; their tents have disappeared, and nothing is left on the horizon, where the familiar camp has stood so long.

On goes the slender figure towards the West, swinging away into the sunset. It vanishes down an incline in the road, and reappears farther off, marching steadily nearer the shadows of the hills, and the camp that is preparing to go forward, in the early morning, to Gallipoli. He will return to England, one day, *if* he is lucky.

The bugle is sounding "Officers' Wives," and the Sister turns into the tent.

After dinner comes the ward again; a bright-looking chap is playing "I was born in Michigan," while others sing. One Orderly is deep in *John Bull*, and another is giving an exhibition of clog-dancing to a group of admiring spectators, when the Sister enters, followed by a Sergeant.

"Empty beds?"

"Yes."

"Stretcher case!"

There is a hush as the new case is brought in. His face is ashen and his hands are very cold. The M.O. is summoned. "There is not much that we can do," he says thoughtfully, as he leaves the ward.

The new patient is persuaded to drink some milk and says that he feels better. His fingers close over those of the Sister "Nurse, am I going to die?" he asks brokenly.

"Indeed you are not," the Sister assures him, but she glances doubtfully at his glassy eyes.

The work goes on quietly, and at last the Night Sister reports on duty.

"The new case has just had a bad turn," the Day Sister tells her, "but he has been

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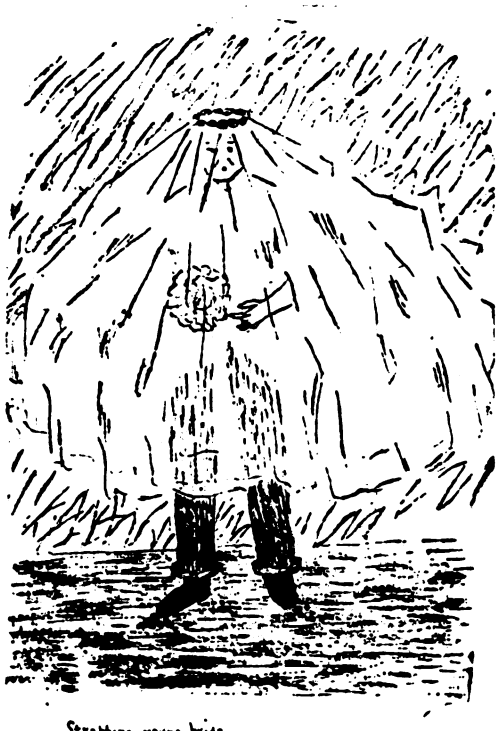
better since he had his hypodermic. He is on the Danger List." Together they go to the bedside; the patient's pulse is good and he is sleeping quietly. "He may pull through," whispers the Night Sister. "We can only wait and see."

The Day Sister steps towards the door and says good night. "Good night, Sister," comes heartily from the ward as the door closes behind her. Another day is over.

One bright afternoon two Sisters went for their first donkey-ride, though the diminutiveness of the little animals was so pronounced that reciprocity in transportation seemed only fair. Children flocked in the narrow village streets, demanding "One penny." If this were forthcoming "*Kalispera*" came with an engaging smile, but if not, a stone or two would probably be hurled at a safe distance from the rear. Coming home, the Sisters stopped at a charnel-house, where they met an embarrassed Orderly, who confided that he was procuring a skull "to send home to the Missus for a souvenir fern-pot."



Strapping young bride.

Late in October a party of sight-seers drove to Castro in a donkey-cart; though the seat slipped from under them with such regularity that they spent most of their time, *en route*, having vertebral concussions on the floor of the wagon.

When the Sisters entered a shop the place was turned upside down, and everything exhibited, from the door-mat to the chandelier, lest they should escape without buying. Many were grateful for the existence of these places, when it was decided to have a masquerade on Hallowe'en; and, as the dancers looked about the room that night, it was almost unbelievable that it had all been accomplished with a little ingenuity and the aid of a few Castro shops.

The acknowledged belle of the evening was a fair bride in the form of an extremely large officer. An immense mosquito-net did duty as a bridal-veil, and hung in such elaborate confusion that he seemed to be walking behind a waterfall. He wore a wreath not of orange blossoms, but onions, and carried a cauliflower tied with a bandage.

In November a splendid band-concert was given by the New Zealand Camp. It was held around a bonfire in a hollow, the ground forming a natural amphitheatre. Crowds congregated about the place and, in the dim moonlight, it looked as one would imagine a battle-field after an engagement. One could not help wondering how many of these precious bodies would, in a few short weeks, be strewn about the rugged steeps of the Peninsula.

"It felt to-night," said one of them afterwards, "as it often does on Gallipoli, when

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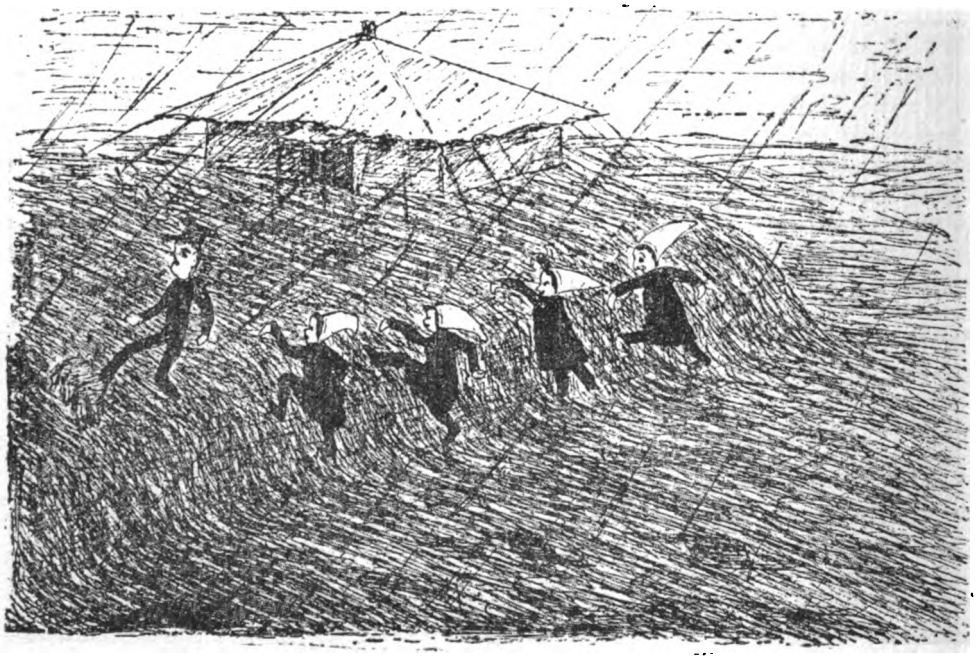
Death of the new-born stripe.



Sisters in "British warms" and pullees scaling hill near Mess.

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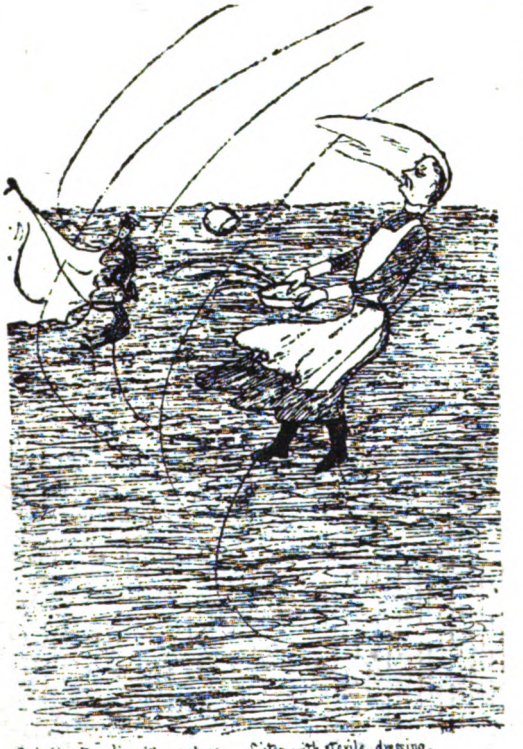
you stand and watch the waters of the Ægean lying like liquid silver in the moonlight. There is not a sign of war for it is still, and yet you feel the thousands around you. Tiny sparks of light are seen up the slope, where men in various dugouts are making themselves a cup of tea, or boiling an egg; and nothing is visible on the hill, though you know that the enemy's guns are there. The submarines dart through the water, like gnats on a pool, here, there, and everywhere; but the difference to-night was that you could count on being alive in an hour's time."

A few days later when *réveillé* was sounding one could see threads of khaki moving around the edge of the inlet towards the road that leads to the pier, and, as they came nearer one knew by their hats that they were the Anzacs off to the front again.



Orderlies struggling with wreckage of bell tent. Sister with sterile dressing.

What multitudes would have come from far and near, to honour these heroes returning to the place where they had gone through Hell, and came out like gold tried in the furnace! But only a few men saluted them as they passed, and, mercifully, the loved ones at home did not know that their short rest was over. For some time after they had disappeared strains came back faintly over the hill, "And for bonnie Annie Laurie I'd lay me doon and dee," and one knew that many were embarking for their last sail across the Ægean Sea.

Near the hospital was a small canteen, where nothing needful was found, and exorbitant prices were asked for what one didn't need. It was kept by a Greek who sold eleven eggs in a dozen and charged for thirteen. One morning the news went around that the canteen-keeper had been murdered by a rival, and all knew that his habit of running off with other people's possessions had crept, alas! into his social life. To this canteen one day came a newly fledged Lance-Corporal. The result was inevitable, and henceforth he was nicknamed a "gay old bird."

As the rainy weather came on, the troops had their introduction to Lemnos mud. Possibly it was worse this year than usual, having absorbed from the British the spirit of "sticking to it"; but it could not be said that people walked at this time; they floundered about in clay, which oozed over their feet until they fancied several yards of real estate were trailing in the rear. Then it would start oozing upwards, and when it had reached the knee it would ooze downwards again over the first layer of ooze. Unfortunately this was also the season of hurricanes, and several times when little parties started on outings. they became

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stuck in the mud, and were glad to turn homewards and be literally blown back to camp. Added to this, there was a confusing network of irrigation trenches over the country, and guy-ropes about the camp, so that night duty at this time was not without its perils.

On a wonderful autumn evening, when the moon was round and low, there came a young Sub. to "No. 1."

Clarice was sweet and shy, and was thought to be completely absorbed in splints and bandages, so it was quite natural that there should be a perceptible flutter when the supposedly invulnerable fortress had fallen, and Clarice admitted that she was rather fond of her rather fonder friend. As time went on the Mess saw less and less of this dignified member, and it was evident that in time she would become an unknown quantity.

Now, this young Sub. lived at "Turk's Head," and in order to spend more time with Clarice, he had to travel to and fro on the noisiest of noisy motor-cycles. Thus his arrival and departure were points of interest to many about the camp, until Clarice besought him to walk half the way home.

One day, just about Christmas time, it was rumoured that the Mess was to lose one of its Sisters in the near future, and the young Sub. sailed for Egypt with a triumphant bearing and joyful heart.

It was necessary to have a home-made Christmas that year, for the decorations had not arrived; so sheets, red triangular bandages, and cotton wool adorned the walls, with very gratifying results. Tables were placed in the middle of the wards, and here again sheets and bandages came into play, while soda-bottles, concealed in tissue paper, acted as candle-sticks, and candle-shades were constructed of wire and covered with bits of bandages, tinted with various coloured inks. It was a wonderful day, and every-

Sister risking life gladly for patients.

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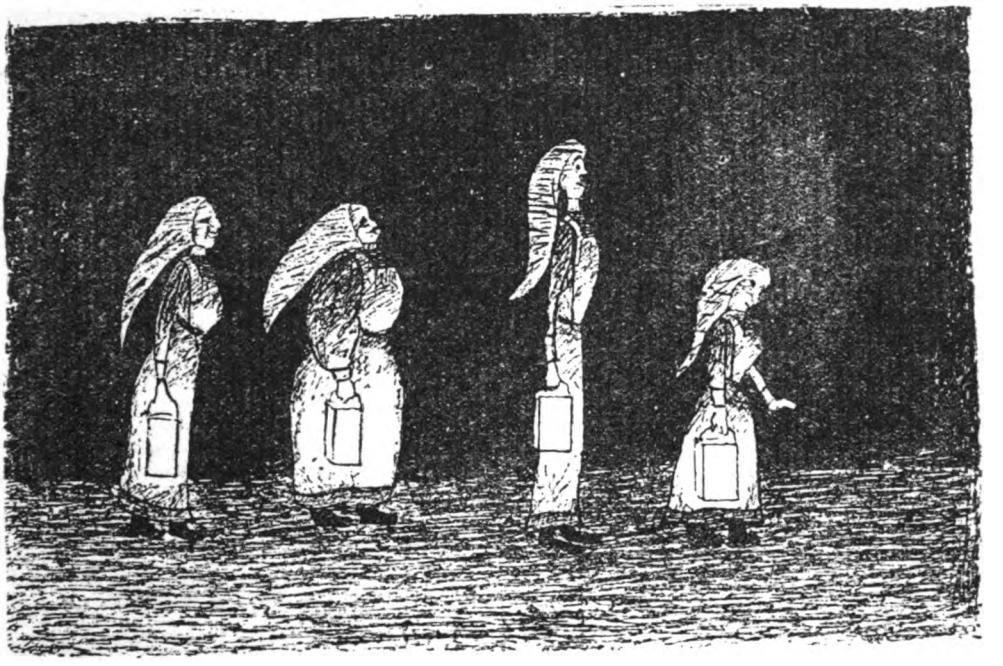

The Night Staff.

thing passed off so well that many remarked on the pronounced presence of the Christmas spirit.

In the evening each ward had its own concert, provided by the patients. In one tent the most noteworthy number was a song of some eight verses, with chorus between each, about "The Feushileersh." It was composed by the singer and, though it bore a striking resemblance to several popular airs, still in many ways was quite unique!

When Christmas was celebrated in the Sisters' Mess they were glad to welcome back some of the Anzacs, and 29th and 13th Divisions, who had evacuated Suvla and Anzac only a week before.

It is not necessary to say anything of these princes among men. They laughed and joked in a lighthearted way and, except for the awful sadness in their eyes, a stranger would have thought them the most carefree of men. Some of them were returning immediately to Cape Hellas.

The year 1916 was ushered in by all the battleships in the harbour, an incongruous sound in the midst of silent primeval Lemnos.

February found "No. 1" on board the late H.S. *Dover Castle*.

What sadness to leave this world which had been so cut off from everywhere, and which was yet so full of busy little communities, which one had watched in the making. One had always felt that it was a chapter, unique in its joys and sorrows, which was soon to pass away; for weeks the same men had groomed the same horses every day across the inlet, and the procession of weary men went swinging along the dusty roads at night-fall. And then, suddenly, one noticed that the camps with their

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stirring companies had left for ever, the bugles ceased to sound, and the wind swept again over the bleak expanses of Mudros.

FAREWELL TO LEMNOS

Rugged little Isle of Lemnos,
In the blue Ægean Sea,
We have cursed you, but we like you
Just the same,
And when mists of time obscure you,
And we're scattered far and wide,
I am sure that we shall long to
Hear your name.

When we landed in our splendour,
On your dusty, gusty shore,
With our brilliant parasols and
Shoes of white,
How the black Egyptians started,
And the Tommies laughed in glee,
At the human rainbow streaming
Into sight.

Then we viewed the landscape dimly,
Through a mist of playful flies,
And the clouds of dust that entered
Every lung,
Mingled with the oily bacon,
Which was all we had to eat,
And we somehow felt that trouble
Had begun.

Oh! we shrieked in desperation,
And we tore our frumpled hair,
For the bread was sour and the
Eggs were bad,
And the milk was mostly water,
And the tea was all chlorine,
And the flies bathed freely in the
Jam we had.

We were sick and we were lonely,
We were "fed up" with no food,
We were dirty, we were dusty,
We were sad,
But we stuck it out together,
And we tried to be polite,
And be thankful for the things we
Never had.

Obliging Sub. Anxious Clarice

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But the Navy men came forward,
Brought us cocoa, brought us bread,
And they told us they could always
Get us more,
So we thanked them and we blessed them,
And grew fat as rubber balls,
And felt sorry for the swears that
We had swore.

Then they brought us in the wounded,
And the sick and the oppressed,
Who have blessed us sometimes with their
Fleeting breath,
They were weary and down-hearted,
From the service they had seen,
From disease and hunger and the
Sight of death.

Through the fly-time and the dust-time,
Through the bleak and winter days,
Fear-defying, living, dying,
With a will,
Men of Lemnos! when we scatter,
And the tide of time rolls by,
Ever green will be the memory
Of you still.

Though the earth was dust and stubble,
There was moonlight bright and clear,
And the sun rose pink and amber,
From the bay,
And the glory o'er the mountains,
Red and gold and violet,
Seemed a benediction from
Departing day.

Fare you well, old Isle of Lemnos,
With your mingled memories,
With your wind-storms and your dust-storms,
And your rain,
With your hundred camp-fires burning,
And your harbour towards the south,
You have sheltered Britain's forces,
Just the same.

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CHAPTER V.

EGYPT.

A FEW days after leaving Mudros "No. 1" arrived at Alexandria, and the Nursing Sisters boarded a Red Cross train for Cairo.

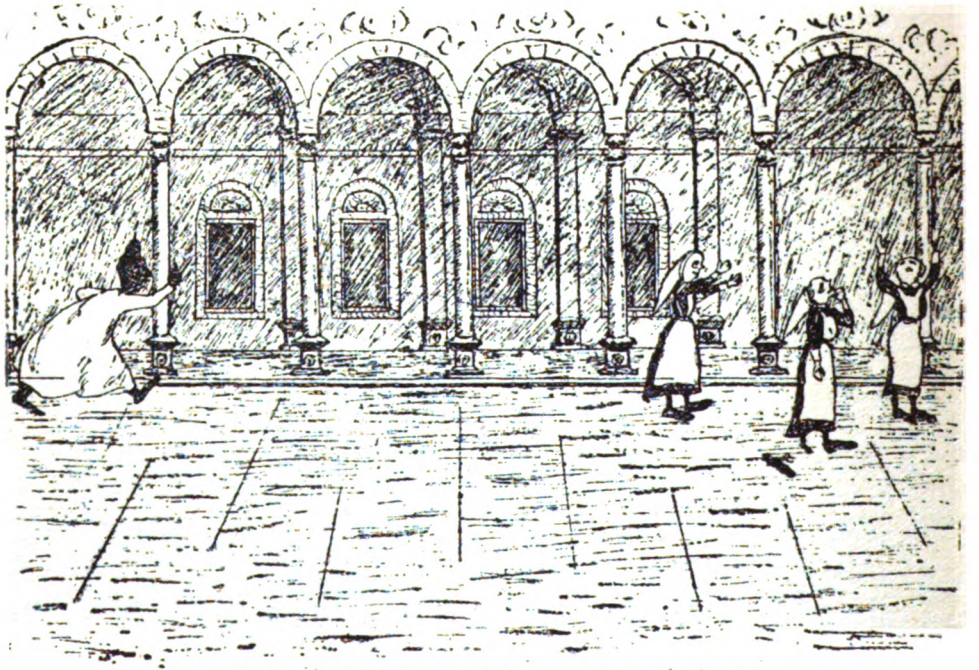
It was enchanting to watch from the carriage windows the stream of natives driving their camels and donkeys along the road. While stopping at a station, *en route*, two enormous buffaloes passed, led by a child, so small that one would think her scarcely able to walk.

The flush of a typical Egyptian sunset was over all the sky, and the palm-trees fanned themselves with their fringed leaves in a dreamy sort of way.

The extensive canals, visible throughout the country, are monuments of mighty deeds of service to Egypt in days gone by. It is said that plans for irrigating the land have been found, supposed to have been laid out by an ancient king, hundreds of years B.C., but no one was able, at the time, to put them into execution. "Dat king Breetish in Speerit," remarked a guide.

When they arrived at the station the Sisters were packed away in ambulances, and driven to the Semiramus Hotel. This beautiful building is situated on the banks of the Nile, close to the Kasr-el-Nil Bridge; and from the upper windows one has a fine view of the Pyramids of Ghizeh. Directly across the river are lovely gardens, resplendent at night with lights which sparkle along the bank.

In the day-time white pillared houses are seen, peeping from a mass of ferns and palm-trees. Voices of natives, singing, come wafted from the *feluccas* which glide



Guide with religious principles at stake. Appreciative Sisters

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Cox's Agency stating cost of shipping owing to price of lumber.

Sisters thinking of bargains.

by, and *dahabeahs* lie along the banks. A blue mist often falls upon the Nile in the evening, and melts in the morning when the sun rises.

A short distance from the hotel stands "The Presidency," at one time a home of the late Earl Kitchener.

Every day at noon a group of natives collected at the entrance to the hotel, with panels, beads, and pottery, and one learned the value of steadfastness of purpose in driving bargains. These natives were usually accompanied by a snake-charmer, whose monkey danced to the jingle of his tambourine; but none were able to discover his charming qualities, for his greasy, half-dead snakes were simply placed on the pavement for a few seconds, and then put back into his bag again. "Fine sight," he would announce, in an almost convincing manner.

The numerous mosques form one of the chief attractions of Cairo, that of Mohammed Ali in the Citadel being the most popular. At the entrance one is strapped into slippers so that the feet may not touch holy ground; but, likely as not, just as one has crossed the court, a hue-and-cry will be raised in the direction of the doorway, as a guide hurries forward, gesticulating at the discovery that some one has accidentally stepped out of a holy shoe.

From the outside of the building one gets a marvellous panoramic view of the city and the Nile.

At other mosques students are being prepared for the Moslem University. They sit about the floor in groups of fifty or more, at the feet of their teachers, who read aloud in a monotonous tone, or write on blackboards. The babel is deafening. Some sway to and fro as they memorize parts of the Koran. All have their shoes off, and wear white cloths around their *fezes*.

The bazaars are filthy, narrow streets, swarming with diseased humanity, many

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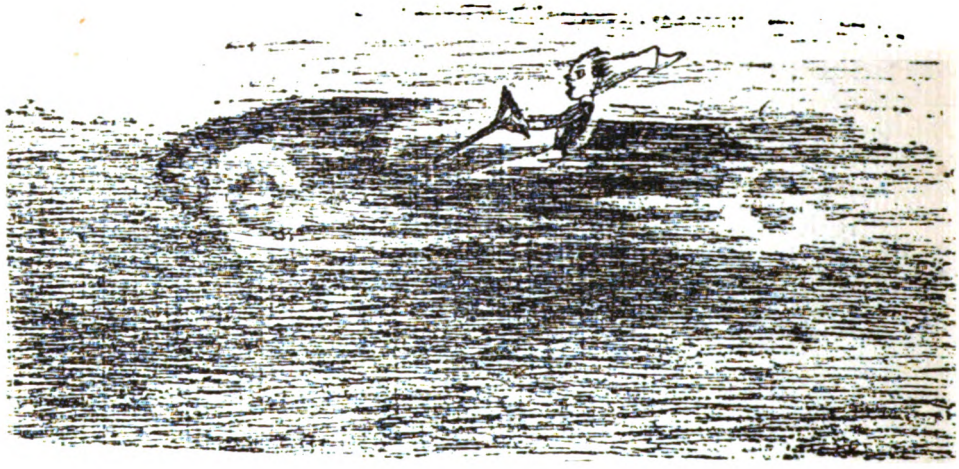
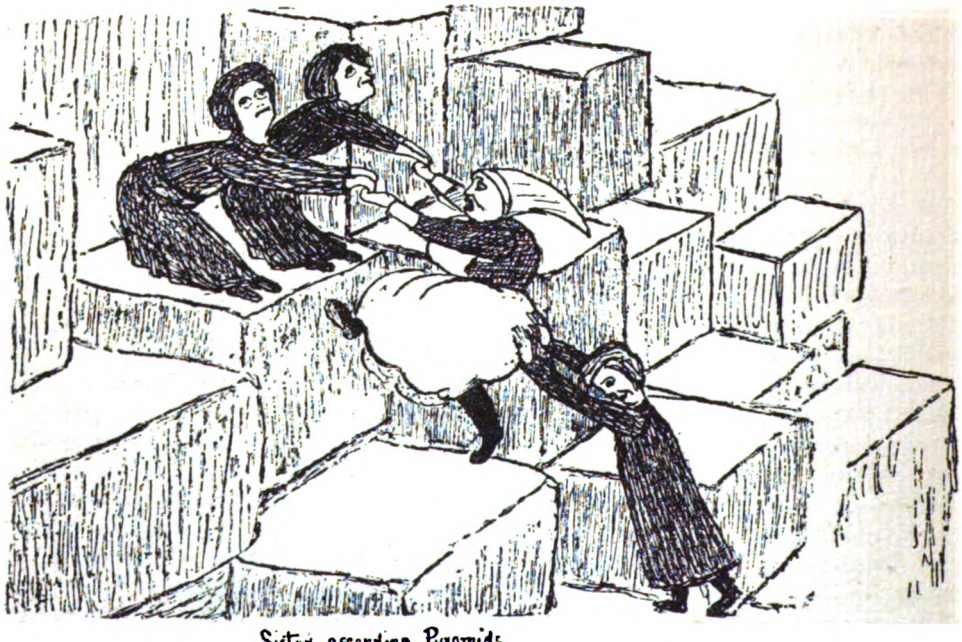


Sensations of uncertain nature.

crying their wares. Camels, carriages, donkeys, motors, men, women, and children push and shove in every direction.

The streets are lined with stalls, elevated a few feet above the ground, where men, sitting tailor-fashion, manufacture their merchandise. Jewellery, shoes, and bright-coloured materials are displayed in profusion to attract the passers-by. A dull thud, as of machinery, comes from a shop where



Sister ascending Pyramids

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spices are being pounded for a line of customers; and sharp strokes of a hammer near by, accompanied by a shrill voice, declare that one can find there the best brass in Cairo. At another stall, men iron with their left feet, while their right hands grasp the long curved handles.

In the perfume bazaar a man discourses on attar of roses to a crowd who, ignorant of his existence, are buying from a rival establishment across the way. In one stall a man sells lace, while his old father, oblivious of his surroundings, sits behind him studying the Koran.

Every few minutes the voice of a water-carrier is heard as he turns a corner, his pigskin slung behind, and his brass glistening in the sun. People pass carrying bundles of hay, large trays piled with bread, or crates of live poultry on their heads. The air is heavy with an indescribable aromatic smell of spices and perfumes, dust and musty antiques, which has a peculiar fascination.

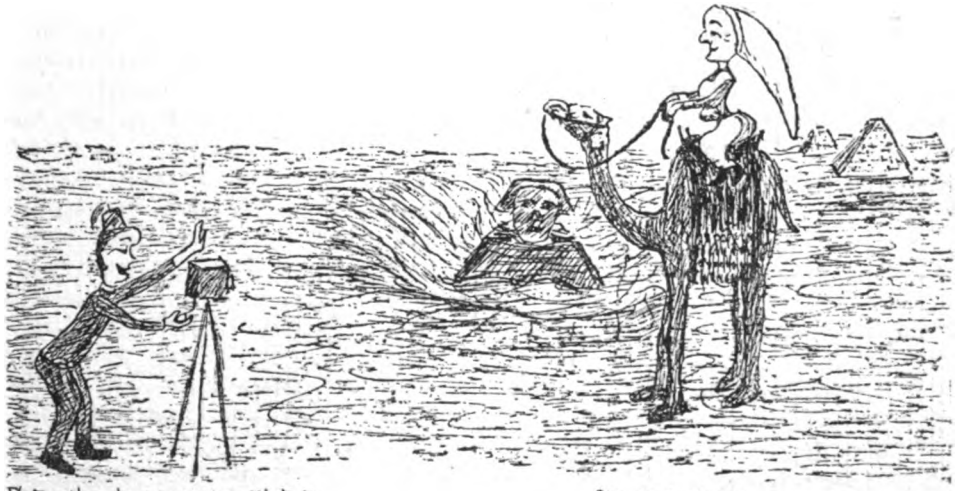
Many old mosques are scattered through the bazaars, and it brings a feeling of peace, when suddenly, above the squalor of earth, *muezzin* is heard calling the Faithful from a slender minaret which looms softly against the sky.

The Sisters spent many hours in these busy streets, though, later, it was learned with sorrow that it was simpler to purchase than to transport.

The distance between Cairo and the Ghizeh Pyramids is frequently covered at an alarming speed.

Coming near, one sees people, like so many flies, climbing up the side of the Great Pyramid of Cheops. At the end of the road camels are standing in the shade of the trees; some snort with temper and refuse to kneel, while others raise their heads in haughty disdain, and sneer at those who come to hire them, for one usually rides the rest of the way.

When a camel is selected it is led aside, the owner pulling at its head and hissing until it kneels. Seated upon it, one clutches wildly at the wooden pommel, and it rises, swaying backwards and forwards in a peculiar manner, as though trying to dislocate one's spine. When a dizzy height is reached, midway between earth and sky, and a final farewell having been breathed earthward, things settle down, and it appears



Photographer who understands public taste.

Sister trying to look accustomed to camels.

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Man burying more beads for visitors to discover.
Sisters (wearing hyperics) excavating beads probably dating from 3000 B. C.

that one is not to be taken after all. Then the camel moves forward by a series of waves, which impart a churning, Biscay sensation; but just as a certain amount of composure is regained, the guide states that camels have a nasty habit of biting their riders, and intimates that, their mouths being large, they can expunge the entire face at a bite. He then throws the leading rein aside, with the remark that camels run faster than horses, often going for miles into the desert, before they can be brought to a standstill.

It is impossible to form a correct idea of the Pyramids until one has seen them, the blocks of stone being so symmetrically piled that the proportion of the whole is lost, until one views it at close range.

People are being pulled and pushed from one step to the next, and the effect is at times rather ludicrous.

After exploring these ancient tombs, one usually goes on to the Sphinx, a lonely figure, whose calm, impartial face has gazed out over the desert for thousands of years.

Here is encountered the inevitable photographer, surrounded by his patrons, on camels, "alone or grouped with the Pyramids and Sphinx in the background," while he admonishes, "Now, Meester, look a smile."

The Sphinx by moonlight, or, to be flippant, the "Minx by Spoonlight," seems even more mysterious and ancient than by day. A peculiar reflection comes from the ground, and camels walk stealthily along, led by white-robed dragomen, who move like ghosts in the darkness. The shadows of many are seen, but all sounds are muffled in the sand, and the spirits of the desert, if such there be, are surely abroad.

Near the Pyramids excavators have been at work.

Nothing in Cairo is, of course, more instructive than its Museum. In one room is a statue of a princess, whose feet are held tightly in place by a fold in her robe.

"Hobble skirt," declares the guide. "Der is nothing new under de sun," and when one comes to Pharaoh's chariot, and

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it is found to have rubber tyres, the guide repeats, "I tell you, der is nothing new under de sun."

Judging from the quantities of embalmed chickens, and legs of lamb, which were placed in the coffins for the dead to feed upon, vegetarianism was not in vogue at this period. Myriads of tiny figures were also buried with the bodies, to help them in their work; for the dead were supposed to fill the canals with water, and see to the ripening of the grains.

Sailing up the Nile from Kasr-el-Nil Bridge one comes to the Island of Roda, where stands an old palace which belongs to the period of the Pharaohs, some of whose descendants still live there. A stone embankment has superseded the bulrushes, but a tree marks the vicinity where, as a guide remarked, "leetle Mr. Mose was found."

Farther on one passes a flight of steps reaching along the bank. Many boats laden with grains, spices, and cattle are drawn up, and just above the stairs is a long row of one-storied buildings. Natives jostle each other on the steps, bargaining and selling, their voices coming in a confused babel across the water. This place, repaired from time to time, has been the great harbour-market of all Upper Egypt since 3000 B.C. the products of the interior being brought here to be sold.

Lining the banks are many tumble-down villages, at one of which a landing is usually made. Men lie about sleeping in the shadows of buildings, and, in a field near by, awnings have been spread, under which cattle are standing, seeking shelter from the scorching sun. In the fiery noonday the hum of insects is heard, and everything seems drowsy except the exuberant little birds. From here one starts inland on donkeys, the donkey-boys running behind and calling their animals by name, such as "Whisky," "Motor Car," "Black Diamond" and "Telephonia."

The road first leads through magnificent palm-groves, where feathery foliage grows in such profusion that, in places, the trees seem to be pushing it back, in order to get a breathing space; and tangled ferns, motionless in the still air, droop in every direction. It is even hotter here than on the river, and a heavy perfume comes from the shady depths of the wood.

Away in the distance the little donkeys are seen, cantering along through the dust pursued by the ever-shouting donkey-boys; everything shrinks to diminutive proportions in contrast to the wide road and towering palm-trees, which meet high overhead, like lofty cathedral arches.

Leaving the site where Memphis once stood, the path lies through part of the desert. Here the sense of loneliness is stifling. It seems as though the wind had been playing over these miles of sand for centuries, tossing up hills and swirling out hollows, like children on the sea-shore, and then had stopped suddenly and gone away from it for ever. Nothing could be worse than to be lost in this world of dreary desolation; for the tracks through it seem to lead to nowhere, and one feels that the living creatures which left them will never return this way.

Its vast stretches hold manifold commendations and convictions, but they are silent. Only when one gets in tune can the hosts of dead be heard. Their voices rustle in the palm-trees and come stealing across the desert. Everything has been, and is not, except for what it has been. Proud dynasties and cities, mighty and defiant, are buried deep in the yellow sand.

The Tomb of the Sacred Bulls at Sakkarah is a gruesome place, lit only by candles carried by visitors. As one thinks of the footprints in the sand, discovered here after 3700 years, the span of human life seems but a moment.

When one returns at evening the sun is low over the Libyan Desert. The sunsets of Egypt are rich in gold, brightening

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usually to bands of flaming red, which sweep across the western gateway of the world. Against this the palm-trees stand out like daubs of black paint, and later there comes an afterglow of deep rose.

Leaving the donkeys at the road one follows the path leading to the river.

One evening a Sister, who was rather large in proportion to her donkey, had required additional service from her donkey-boy, which necessitated his galloping along by her side to hold her in place. When the time came to give *baksheesh*, the Sister, though generous, was unable to quiet the insatiable lad. "Seester too heavy for donkey," he kept repeating in a loud voice. Several times the Sister dropped behind to pay him "hush money," but he always came on again refusing to be hushed. Finally he began to cry, and the mortified Sister, who had given her last piastre, was forced to borrow from her friends. Then every one turned on the little wretch and he was off like a shot, stopping however, to call back "All right, Seester too heavy. Every one see dat," to the poor Sister, whose face rivalled the sunset.

Cautious donkey-boy eying his new beat

If the moon is up by the time one is again on the Nile, the magic of dreams will be surpassed by the actual; for a purple light is over everything, and all is still except for the musical sound of the water. The roads along the banks are deserted, and one glides past slumbering villages, and haunted-looking ruins, through which little moonbeams sift. Coming on, hoops of light spanning the river, reveal the bridges of Cairo, and by the time one reaches the lions on the Kasr-el-Nil, the spell of the night is broken.

This beautiful trip was not appreciated by Clarice, for the young Sub., though stationed at Ismailia, was unable to get leave to Cairo. Telegrams were of no avail, for the army regulations had made no provision "in case of lovers."

On the way to Old Cairo stands a harem, six hundred years old. It is built around an open court, on one side of which the men of the house entertained; the women, who were supplied with sweets, coffee, and cigarettes, peeped through the windows across the court. One regards these windows with a shudder, as if, suffering imaginary reincarnation, one should be obliged to enjoy a tea-party at twenty yards' range.

In a small house, in an unpretentious part of Cairo, lives the Baronne de Ronsard, the daughter of a Russian mine-inspector. Though she is now rather far along the road, she remembers the days when, as assistant to Florence Nightingale, she "did her bit"

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in the Crimean War. The Baronne likes nothing better than to entertain her many "children" among the British Tommies, who love her dearly in return.

The time spent in Cairo passed quickly, and all too soon came orders recalling the Sisters to Alexandria.

Just as the ship was moving off a tall man was seen making his way down the wharf. Several sisters, including Clarice, were at the railing, and suddenly recognized the young Sub. He had arrived from Ismailia! Fortunately the boat remained within speaking distance of the wharf for some time, but conversation across five yards of water, with dozens of interested onlookers, was, naturally, rather stilted, and Clarice sailed sadly away, leaving a broken-hearted young Sub. waving farewell.

TO THE NILE

I love thee at the dawning,
  Thine emerald-tinted stream,
Through mists of azure gliding,
  Like something in a dream,
Where gay *feluccas* linger,
  With silver sails agleam.

I love thee sparkling onward,
  Past many a mansion fair,
When merchant-boats come laden
  With cargoes rich and rare,
And dusky natives clamour,
  And throng the market-stair.

And when the blaze of noonday
  Beats on the golden sand,
Thy cool green waves come surging
  Through Egypt's thirsty land,
Where stately palms are mirrored
  Along the glistening strand.

I hear thy voice at sunset
  Calling my soul to pray,
Whispering of kings and nations
  And worlds that pass away,
Of crumbling tombs and temples,
  Of Egypt's yesterday.

But when the moon is risen,
  And souls creep from the West,
To sail again in splendour
  Upon thy silver breast—
O, dark and sacred waters!
  'Tis then I love thee best.

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CHAPTER VI.

SALONICA

SHORTLY after leaving Alexandria, the H.S. *Lanfranc*, with "No. 1" on board, dropped anchor in Salonica Harbour. Here, as at most places, there seemed to be a little misunderstanding regarding the Sisters; in fact, the only place where they were apparently expected was in the Lemnos Cemetery, where the solemn grave-digger had reserved several open graves in a corner, "to have youse all together if possible," as he once told a startled Sister.

Looking from the harbour, snow-capped mountains are seen to rise majestically to the west, Mount Olympus standing out superbly, its three silver peaks shading into the blue shadows. Marble-coloured sea-gulls skim about, as though filled with the joy of living, and to the east Salonica rises suddenly from the water's edge. Part of the city wall is still standing, and the Citadel is seen farther up the hill, overlooking this ancient town.

"No. 1" took over the New Zealand Hospital at Lembet, situated on a plain surrounded by a ring of mountains.

There were some Greek villages near by, whose occupants called at intervals on the newly-arrived Sisters, usually about four o'clock in the morning. Simultaneously, shoes disappeared with mysterious regularity from the front line of huts, until one morning, when an unfortunate Sister awakened to find a small boy making off with her last pair of boots. She gave chase as far as decency would permit, but was finally obliged to abanden the chase and submit to fate.

The problem was solved by a barbed

Young Greek showing current Greek tendency

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Medical Officers enjoying the air-raid.

wire which hereafter enclosed the Sisters' quarters.

Between the Lembet and Monastir roads is a small elevation, commonly called "St. Paul's Pimple," where the Apostle is supposed to have delivered an oration to the Thessalonians.

Soon after they arrived, some Sisters were taken to the trenches. The dug-outs were exceedingly interesting; one beheld pathetic attempts to transform the crude surroundings into a semblance of home. In each was a little collection of pictures, "*La Vie Parisienne*" contributing largely, as in most Naval and Military quarters, to the mural decorations.

Equally appreciated were the afternoons spent on board the submarines, those bulwarks of solid machinery which add such an illustrious company to the host of Britain's guardian angels.

About this time one of the Sisters enjoyed a rather unusual experience.

Flying

You climb up the side of a canvas boat, drop into a hole, and are strapped securely. The Pilot, looking more like a diver than an inhabitant of earth or sky, is seated just ahead, and beyond is the screeching propeller, spinning madly around. The men relax their hold and the machine dashes forward at a terrific speed. In a few seconds you feel it rising on tiptoe as it skims along, and then you leave the ground; up, up you go, until you begin to think that you are a leaf blown before the wind.

Houses get small and flat, and the Aerodrome looks like a bunch of croquet-wires stuck in the earth. Great ships become specks, and rivers seem like long bits of satin ribbon strewn about. Towns cuddle up to where mountains were, but are not, for as you come towards them they flatten out, and the lakes beyond come forward to meet you.

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You wonder how you ever thought aeroplanes resembled mosquitoes, for you feel that you cover ten acres at least. The air rushes by, yet when you look directly beneath, it seems as though the machine had suddenly stopped.

"What is the matter?" you call to the Pilot, thinking that something has gone wrong, and preparing to meet death calmly, if possible; but your voice is drowned in the roar.

Though swathed in fur, your fingers and toes are freezing, and you wonder why aeroplanes are not fitted with foot-warmers.

The Pilot glances back and raises his eyebrows in an expectant way; evidently his sentence, which is entirely lost, has begun with the Latin *Nonne* and you nod encouragingly. Simultaneously, the horrible thought occurs to you that you have acquiesced to a series of loop-the-loops. You tap him gently on the shoulder and make a sign to go straight ahead; but he apparently thinks that you have discovered hostile air-craft and scans the horizon. He does not turn round again, for he thinks that the altitude has made you hysterical, and you do not care to disturb him, for you think that the tension has driven him mad, so you both dash on trusting in Providence.

The sun is just sinking and the clouds are hurrying westward. "Come on," they call as they sail by; but the big bird flaps its wings and turns where it will, through the trackless air, nor ever looks behind. It does not belong to earth or sky, but is an independent part of the whole.

Suddenly you begin to descend in corkscrew fashion, until you are almost standing on your head, and you gaze, panic-stricken, into six thousand feet of mental anguish.

With a tremendous effort you make known to the Pilot your last request and resign

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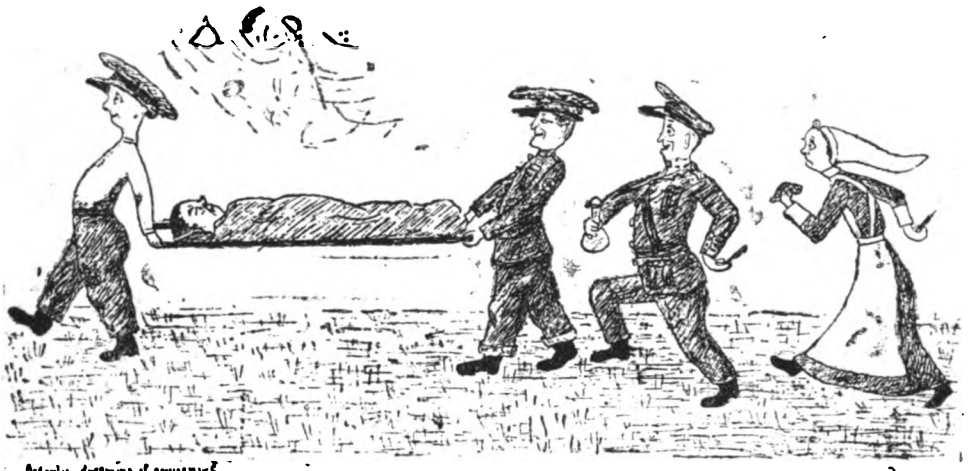

Orderly dreaming of souvenirs. Patient with unkind feeling towards hospital. Happy M.O. with sharp knife. Sister pleased to bring hypodermic

yourself to the worst, when the circles widen, and you float peacefully down to earth.

Early morning air-raids are a favourite form of German amusement, so there was ample opportunity to study the latest styles in kimonas and eiderdowns near the Sisters' lines, while in the patients' tents all were ordered under cover. "Aren't you coming into the cellar, too, Sister?" came one morning in concerned tones from under a bed where a nervous "shell-shock case" was stowed away.

For a hospital which had handled so many wounded in France, it was strange to witness the excitement caused by the admission of the first surgical case in Salonica.

The tents are filled with serious medical cases, but this seems entirely different. Every few minutes the Sister-in-Charge runs to see if "the wounded" has arrived, and soon the Stretcher-bearers heave into sight. There is no need to notify the M.O. for, though it is after 11 a.m. and all M.O.'s, except the Orderly Officer, have finished their day's toil, one is on the spot, with a look of pleasurable anticipation about the eyes. The Stretcher-bearers come near and right-turn at the tent, the M.O. falling in behind, followed by the Sister, who swings around into place. The patient is deposited on a bed, and a look of alarm overspreads his face, as the M.O., Sister, and Orderlies close in greedily on all sides.

"Where are you hurt?" asks the M.O.

"Bullet or shrapnel?" inquires the Sister.

"Got any souvenirs?" whisper the Orderlies.

"In my foot," says the patient, eyeing the M.O. "Shrapnel," he adds, turning to the Sister, but what he mutters to the Orderlies is never known.

His temperature is taken, he is undressed, bathed and fed, and then it is learned that there is nothing much wrong with him, and his chief request is that the hospital routine be continued as usual, regardless of his presence.

Later on, a Bulgarian prisoner was brought to the tent. On either side of him were men who had lost legs, and opposite was a lad of nineteen who had sacrificed an arm and an eye. There were many threatenings and fist-shakings at the prisoner, especially from a sturdy Able-Bodied Seaman whose boots were held in readiness, should occasion arise. In fact, there was not going to be much left of the wretched man by the time the ward had finished with him.

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One evening, a Sister stole back cautiously to see that all was well; she found the sailor lad gently arranging the Bulgar's pillows, and speaking to him as tenderly as though he had been a child. Such are the hearts that beat under the fierce exterior of Britain's fighting men.

A number of Turkish prisoners, too, came suddenly into the Hospital. One died the following night, and, when the Orderly brought back the mortuary-stretcher and laid it against the next bed, the nervous occupant expostulated, "Me no feenish, Johnnie, me no feenish."

With much *eclat* the first General arrived on the scene, and, though a sensible and unassuming man, some of his friends were far from such, so that, during his brief stay, there were many concerned "Red tabs" inquiring for the Officers' line.

At the same time there was a little private in the next line who thought it hard that notice should be given to one more than another, so, stealing out of his tent one night, he made his way to the quarters of the Officer Commanding, where he exchanged his uniform for one of senior rank, and covered his body with the Censor's stamp. It was doubtful whether there was absence of judgment or presence of audacity; but the fact that he was under age, and also that the O.C. knew how to temper justice with mercy, got him safely past more than the Censor, and he boarded a ship for Blighty.

Another passenger on this ship was the light-hearted Clarice, who went home to finish a happy little romance of Lemnos.

In the line of small gifts, which, of course does not include a sea voyage to England, none are more appreciated by a Tommy than a "pass" to the nearest town, either of the midnight or week-end variety, or a snapshot of himself.

The 12th of July was celebrated by the decoration of General Sarrail by General Mahon. That afternoon, in the ward, some patients were discussing the affair, and it was touching to hear them eulogize this popular British Officer.

"If the men 'adn't enough to eat, there wouldn't be much on 'is table, an' it's more than you could say o' some," said a private

Intimate friends of General. Sister-in-Charge. Son of General's friend, with comrade

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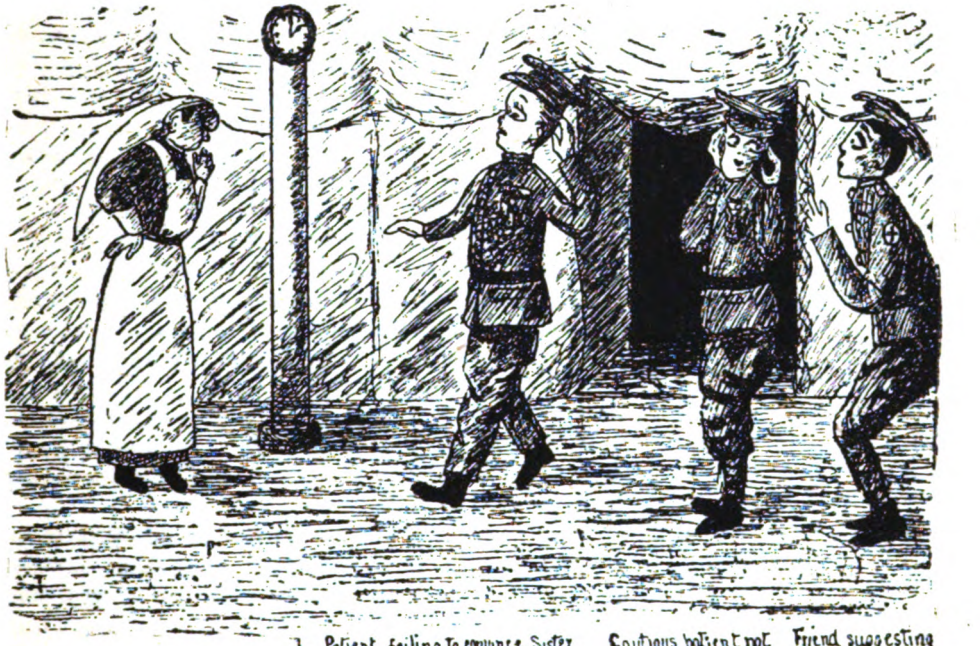
Patient failing to convince Sister that he has been looking for hospital since 9.00 p.m.
Cautious patient not listening to friend.
Friend suggesting further complications.

who had served under him at the Dardanelles.

" 'E always takes 'is chance with the men," added another who had been under him at the same time, and the prevailing opinion was, " 'E's a proper General, is General Mahon." If the farther away from an object the better the perspective, it was a testimony of which any leader might well be proud.

There could not be a more remarkable public highway than the wide white road which sweeps away through Lembet to Salonica.

Just beyond the Lembet tumulus it rises above the surrounding country, and long rows of buildings used by the Serbian Refugees line both sides. Farther on is the Russian camp, its canteen overflowing with big, fair soldiers, who watch everything with a childish curiosity, contrasting strangely with their strapping bodies. The Italian camp boasts a few trees, under which the peculiar square tents are pitched. These soldiers keep very much to themselves, and are rather reserved and dignified looking. There are also French camps, where one comes across the immaculate officers always hurrying along as though bound on urgent business.

A continuous stream of men and vehicles rolls past these camps from morning until night. Donkeys pick their way through the dust, with dainty feet, carrying lazy-looking Greeks, altogether out of proportion to their size; and buffaloes with massive horns and white eyes lumber along, harnessed to skeleton wagons. A long chain of motor-lorries passes from " up the line," looking as though pepper-boxes had been upset over them even to the eyelashes of the drivers, and many " G.S." wagons rattle on, drawn by mules, which stop constantly to measure their mental inflexibility against that of their drivers. Despatch-riders whizz

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by as though the powers of darkness were in hot pursuit; and motors full of "Brass-hats," announced in honking accents, dash along past battalions of Convalescents from Malta, the unfortunates who have failed to reach Blighty.

There are French troops, also, from China, and Greek shepherds in strange costume. Little groups of British officers or soldiers stride by with a get-there-or-die expression to the swing of their shoulders, here, as always, the ballast, the great steadying force.

Turks and Albanians meander along, and effeminate Greeks in various uniforms, any of which would rival Solomon in all his glory.

A group of natives, very much averse to any kind of labour, are at work on a section of the road, thus confining traffic to one half the thoroughfare, so that there is always a line of vehicles either at one end or the other, waiting to be "thumbed" ahead by the signalling Sergeant, and many riders prancing about, trying to keep out of the way of the Red Cross ambulances, of which there are several varieties, including British, French, Italian, and Greek.

Those driven by the Scottish women are by no means the tardiest, for they seem to touch only the high spots on the road; but a chauffeur, who raced for the Tzar's Cup, declared that he took off his hat to these capable women, who are A1 in anything they undertake. He owned that they had surprised him, but he is not the only one who has been surprised!

Having got safely through the congestion of "Piccadilly Circus," one arrives in town, selects a parcel boy, and turns towards the bazaars.

There is an old shop in this quarter kept by a Turk where "everybody" goes, for he stocks a good assortment of rugs, brass, and needlework.

Patient tired from the delay. Patient bandaged for the occasion. Modest patient with D.C.M. Orderly in working dress, so feeling shy. Patient smiling so wife will think him happy on receipt of picture.

Patient hoping for picture. Patient showing off gas-helmet. Sister laughing at same. Sister posing. Working patient surrounded by Sisters. Sister posing. Oldish Sister in youngish pose.

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"How much?" a Sister asks, holding up a cushion-top which seems worth half an hour's bargaining.

"Sixty drachmae." The Sister drops it in disgust having valued it at ten, but the Turk holds up his hands in consternation.

"Dat antique, ten drachmae!"

"How much for the rug?"

"Tree hundred drachmae."

"Much too dear," says the Sister on principle, making rapid mental calculations to ascertain what amount has been named.

"No, cheap, ver' cheap," urges the Turk. "Dat rug ver' old." The Sister picks up a cup, "Real antique," repeats the Turk. "Tourk cup ver' good." A firm in Texas is advertised above the words "Come and see for yourself."

"English?" asks the Sister, pointing to the words.

"No, Tourk," insists the Turk, failing to grasp the significance. The Sister's eyes return to the cushion-top and the Turk's to Sister.

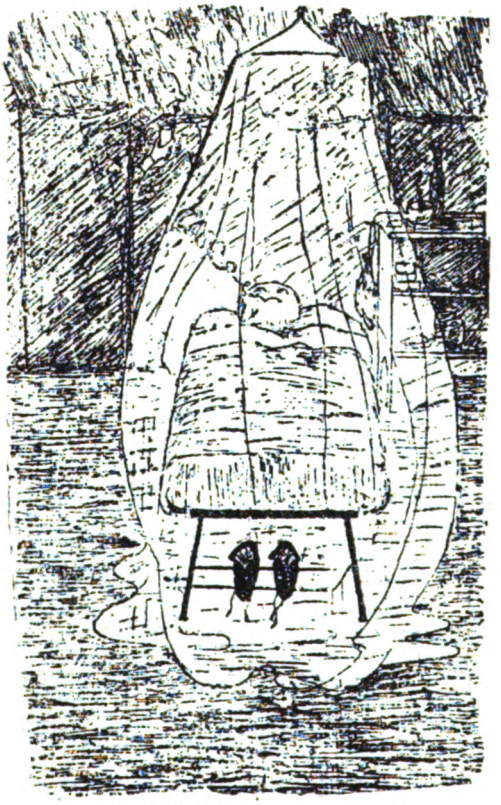
"Fifteen drachmae."

"Sixty."

"Twenty."

"Sixty." A light of mysterious benevolence steals into the Sister's face.

"Give this for twenty-five. I tell my friends. You make money."



O malarial day-dream.

"Forty drachmae."

"I tell all my friends," repeats the Sister, as though taking on a contract to fill his coffers with gold.

"Tirty-five," pleads the Turk.

The Sister seizes the cushion-top and walks to the stairs, followed by the gesticulating Turk. "Twenty-five drachmae," she declares on each step.

"Tirty-five," cries the Turk in a continuous flow. The Sister picks up a bell. "Ver' sweet, how much you give for two?"

"Thirty."

But the man is horrified beyond measure. "Feenesh," he announces, clasping his treasures to his breast.

"All right," says the Sister, holding thirty drachmae well in view, as she moves slowly towards the door. "Good things in other shops very cheap."

She reaches the next window—no, not quite, for the Turk comes hurrying after her.

"Tirty drachmae, all right; give money," he grunts disgustedly and the Sister feels rewarded for her tenacity.

There are several cafés at the foot of Venizelos Street, but the most popular with the allied troops flourishes under the name of *Flocca Freres*. Small tables fill the room, overflowing past the path into

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the middle of the road, and the place is crowded at the tea-hour, though for a while it was "out of bounds" on account of a sudden rise in prices.

For some time one saw the little waiters standing at the door, with a vacant look on their faces, and in the café beyond, until the prospect of a similar feeling in their stomachs brought them to their senses, and the populace back to their tables.

The White Tower is another favourite rendezvous situated on the water-front, at the eastern end of the town. It is a fascinating place at night, with electric lights among the trees, orchestra, and gabbling waiters scurrying to and fro. The armies of Britain, France, Greece, Russia, Italy, and Serbia, and the navies also of the former three, are represented here, along with the motley crowd usually found in such places, the barnacles, leeches, and shrimps of a race, fat Jewesses, gaudily-dressed children, and an occasional wailing infant. Wines are served to suit taste, income, or experience, so that, as a Russian officer said, "after 10 o'clock all languages are the same."

There is a partition at one end of the grounds, behind which, it is said, comely damsels give a vaudeville entertainment. The White Tower on several occasions shared the fate of *Flocca Freres*, but apparently the managers knew their way back into bounds again.

Late in April a splendid horse-show was given by the 28th Division, and the grand-stand and enclosure were radiant with Naval dignitaries, Generals and Staff Officers.

Distracted Medical Officer and Nursing Sister.

Summer came in very quickly, and on the 20th of June an order arrived to the effect that horses' tails were not to be docked, on account of the flies. Of course, all tails had been cut, and an over-zealous groom was discovered starting out to buy a bottle of hair-tonic! At the end of July helmets were issued, and by the time August 20th had arrived the men actually emerged in shorts.

Luckily there had been forethought in the matter of mosquito-nets, and they were ready in abundance when June called "Charge" to the massed armies of this pestilent sect, which abounds in such numbers in Salonica, and whose advent is responsible for the dismal quinine parades.

On the second hill towards the harbour there stood a Russian camp, where, every evening at dusk, the men were lined up for service. It was thrilling to hear their voices coming on the wind, like the chanting

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of a great host, accompanied at times by their bands. Guests were frequently invited to this parade, and afterwards to see the soldiers taking part in the national dances, miraculous gymnastic feats, similar to a clog-dance except that the hands and head are brought continually into play.

One evening the Russians gave a supper. The table formed almost a complete square, both sides being occupied. It was an elaborate affair and quite unique, for many of the guests could speak but one language, so that when one proposed or responded to a toast it was lost on half of those present, who sat around, looking pleasant.

An interesting Russian custom was shown when they drank the health of a guest or rather called upon the honoured one to drink to himself a cup of happiness and good wishes from the hosts. The guest was supposed to empty a large-sized tumbler without stopping, while the others clapped their hands.

Glasses were filled and refilled with an exceptionally intoxicating mixture, and, after a time, a young Englishman glanced under the table to see, as he whispered, whether he could be comfortable during the night.

One Sister tried in vain to understand her French partner until she was extricated by a Russian officer who had learnt English in a French School in Japan. A demure little English girl looked thunderstruck, when a Russian officer insisted on imprinting tokens of affection up and down her arm.

It was a very interesting evening and the hosts showed that Russian hospitality and powers of entertaining were second to none.

One of the most lasting impressions of Salonica is the picture of these splendid troops, singing as they marched among the mountains. At times they could be seen in the distance winding down into a valley, their songs coming faintly on the wind, but when they came near the hills would ring with their lusty voices, and one beheld fine, sturdy-looking men.

Sister hoping for five minutes' repose. Mosquito looking for hole in net.

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One evening there was a gorgeous sunset over Mount Olympus, and looking from the plain one could see, outlined against it, a Russian soldier seated on a rock. There was no one near him, and he sat for a long time with his head upon his arm. It was not hard to tell where his thoughts were. Suddenly the strains of his National Anthem came from the direction of the harbour, and the Russian soldier, alone on the mountain, sprang to attention. He was probably an illiterate peasant, but such spirit might have put to shame some of the first of his land.

In January, 1917, some of the Sisters were recalled to England, and for them the happy days in the Levant were over.

The voyage was uneventful, and two weeks later they disembarked at Marseilles, as the lights were coming out along the shore.

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CHAPTER VII.

FRANCE AGAIN

"CHARLIE"

"SOMEWHERE in France" four men are seated around a table, on which a gramophone grinds out a merry song.

"I don't like that one," says one of them, at the close. "Let's 'ave somethin' more lively."

"What more lively thing could ye want?" ask the others.

"Oh, I s'pose it just gets on me nerves," admits the boy, walking to the tent door; but something in his eyes makes a Sister follow him outside.

"What is it, laddie?" she asks gently.

"I can't bear that piece," exclaims the boy vehemently.

"Why not?"

"It reminds me o' Charlie."

"You like Charlie, don't you?" smiles the Sister.

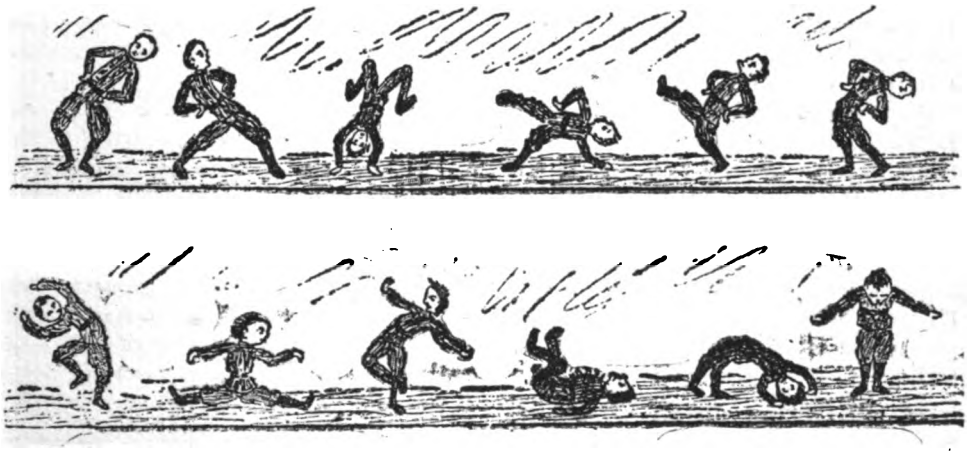
"Used to do, but 'e's not 'ere any more."

"Won't you tell me something about him?"

"Well, Sister," begins the lad, "ye've been more like a mother to me than anything else, an' I will." So the Sister learns of Charlie.

"I'm a bomber, an' 'e were me carrier, an' me chum, too, were Charlie. 'E 'ad more pluck than any lad I ever knew. 'Let's take turns,' 'e'd say in the mornin', 'I'll fetch the water fer breakfast an' ye can fetch it fer tea.'" The lad smiles. "Ye know the mornin's the dangerous time, Sister, an' even when ye'd think it were sure death, Charlie'd swear at me fer tryin' to keep 'im back. 'I'll be alright,' 'e'd say, 'me number's not up yet,' an' off 'e'd go."

"'E 'ad a fine face with little sort o' laughin' eyes, an' roundish chin, more like a gal's, an' is 'air were fair an' curly." A dreamy look comes into the boy's eyes. "Everybody liked 'im," he continues. "I used to think some o' the lads was fair in love with 'im. Ye see, 'e were rather tall, but thinnish, an' only eighteen. Oh! I can jus' see 'im comin' down the trench, whistlin' 'Pack up yer troubles in yer ol' kit bag,' as 'appy as a bird, an', if 'e saw some guy down'earted, comin' up an'



Russian Dancers

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landin' 'im one in the side, to cheer 'im up. No one ever saw 'im, though, when 'e were blue; ye'd jus' miss 'im an' ye'd understan'.

" 'E were always plannin' things, too, so as 'e'd 'ave the dirty end an' the dangerous end, an' then pretendin' as it jus' 'appened that way, an' 'e 'adn't noticed it at all; but the lads knew 'im an' was always watchin' out to see as they took their share. I don't mean 'e were what ye'd call religious," explains the boy.

" Indeed ! " exclaims the Sister.

" By golly ! 'E could swear like a trooper," he continues, " 'e learnt *me* 'ow, an' 'e weren't always sober, neither. I remember one night seein' the Sergeant-Major bring two French gals into a restaurant, when we was there. The gals didn't close in around their table, but set like they was in a movin' picture, an' one on 'em starts lookin' at Charlie. The Sergeant moves a bit, but Charlie moves, too. Then 'e moves again, an' so does Charlie; so up gets the Sergeant-Major an' asks us did we mean to insult 'im, an' Charlie jumps up an' tells 'im where to go to, an' says, if 'e isn't careful, 'e'll 'ave *'im* up fer insultin' *'im*. Then we goes out, an' when we passes by, arf a' 'our later, we sees the Sergeant-Major an' only one gal. I 'spect the pretty one 'ad gone out to look fer Charlie. 'E were a great one fer the gals."

" Were you friends before the war ? " asks the Sister.

" No, but we both joined up at the beginnin', an' even if 'e got it before I did, we've often cleared the parapet an' went into No Man's Land together, an' 'e were the best pal I ever 'ad."

The boy clears his throat. " I'll never forget a night, when we was out o' the trenches, sittin' lookin' at the flashes in the sky. Some on 'em looks like long serpents o' fire an' some goes zig-zaggin' everywhere. Some noise ! Then the signals fer *our* artillery goes up, ' S.O.S.' we calls 'em, an' ye could feel the earth shakin' under ye. I were jus' thinkin' as 'im an' me was lucky to be out o' the scrap that night, when they comes to fetch me up with the reserves. ' Good-bye, Charlie,' I says, but 'e shoves me 'and away. ' Ye needn't think yer goin' to keep all the fun to yerself,' 'e says, ' fer I wouldn't miss it fer the 'ole bloomin' world. I'll go in some other guy's place.' 'E did, too. 'E says 'is prayers afore 'e started, an' then 'e cussed all the way up, jus' like 'is ol' self, so cheerful-like."

" When was he killed ? " inquires the Sister.

" The mornin' we took Vimy," answers the boy. " The two on us was sittin', along with the rest, out in a crater, beyond the front line trench, waitin' fer the charge. Charlie laughs at me an' asks me, ' Are ye afraid ? ' I couldn't tell a feller like 'im as I were afraid, an' no more could I tell 'im a lie, so I jus' looks at 'im straight. ' It's 'ot stuff,' 'e says, 'andin' me 'is mother's address, an' a dark look comes into 'is eyes, like 'e were afraid 'isself, but kin' o' squarin' 'is shoulders in 'is min'. Then 'e says, ' If one on us comes through, go to see me people, matey. They'd like to see ye.'

" I wanted to ask 'im did 'e think 'e were goin' to the Rest Camp, fer it weren't like Charlie to talk like that, but I couldn't say a word.

" ' We're goin' over to show Fritzie what we can do,' 'e says, presently, tryin' to keep up 'is 'eart, an' then we jus' sits thinkin', an', arter a bit, the order comes to charge. I were a'ead, pickin' me way aroun' the shell 'oles, an' 'e were close be'ind. We reached Fritzie's front line, but the Artillery 'ad smashed it all in, an' we jus' walks over. As we was comin' to the secon' line, I felt a wind that knocked me 'at crooked. Somethin' made me look aroun', an' Charlie—I could see 'is boots an' part on 'is legs."

When a frail and ragged civilian is seen,

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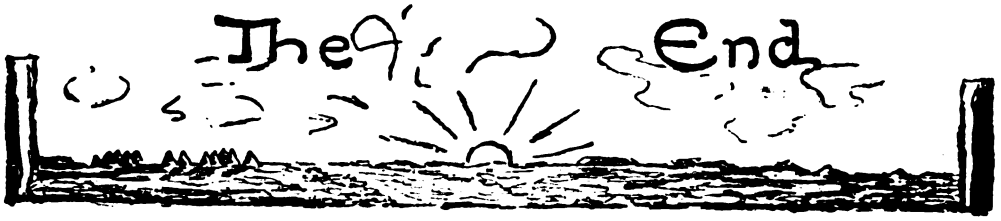
lounging about a street corner, or applies to you for employment, it may be difficult to connect him with the glorious heroes of the battle-field, but look twice for an old cap-badge pinned to his coat, or a gold stripe upon his arm, and, if you see either of these, remember that he marched bravely away one morning, prepared to die, that you, at home, might live. Where would your bank notes, your stocks, your securities be, where would *you* be, if it were not for him? Remember that he has once been a combatant such as Charlie, who, fortunately, was missed by a shell, and let your actions efface a part of the stupendous debt that you owe him.

It was strange to be back again near the western front. The stations were filled with bustling crowds, men, returning or departing, and many who bore sad proof that they had departed and returned.

One mother held a baby out to its daddy and, as it semaphored with its little arms, she told him that it was happy for it knew that he would soon be back. It was sad to watch them waiting through the minutes, those minutes which drag so slowly as they pass, yet seem as nothing when regarded from before or behind. Each was smiling and trying tenderly to mislead the other, when one could see that both hearts were breaking. At last the time came for departure, and the woman gathered strength for a final separation. The man bit his lip, and there was a last earnest farewell. The train began to creep out of the station. "Au revoir, mes petites," called the soldier, with affected cheerfulness—and he was gone. Thus many pass for ever.

Some have joined the noble Army of the Dead who will ever guard the fields of Flanders, others have poured out their blood upon Gallipoli hills or in the desert sands, and many lie far out beside the ancient rivers of Mesopotamia.

Is it much to ask of a people that they should contemplate the misery and devastation of the world and turn, with an unshaken faith, to a future which, they are told, will be the more glorious for what has been? We stand with Nathaniel, and ask "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" and the answer will come, when, from the fields of death, there spring fair flowers, which free-born children will gather with joy. Then those who have passed will smile and answer '"Come and see."'



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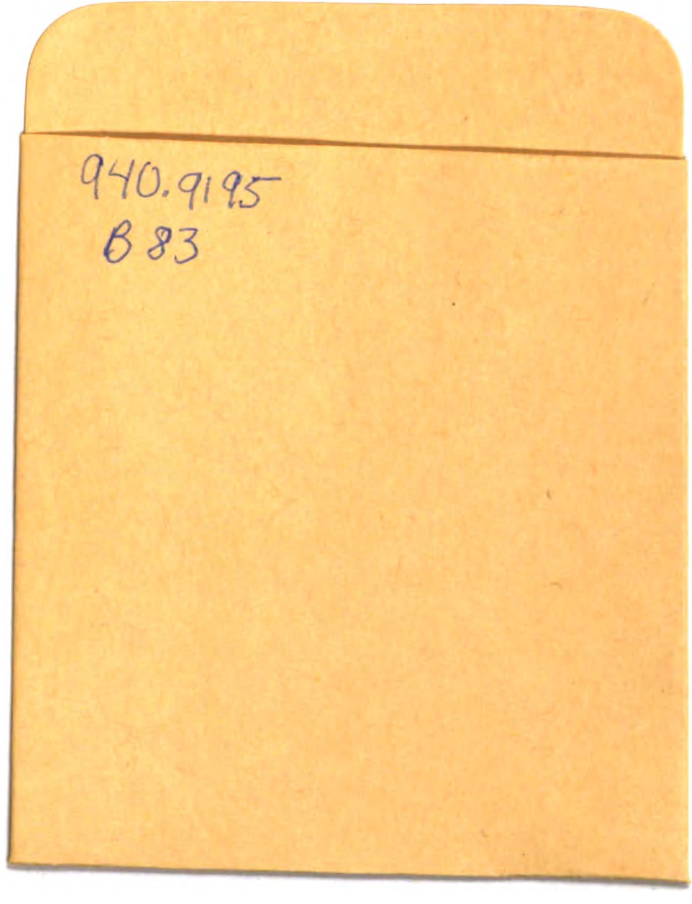

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